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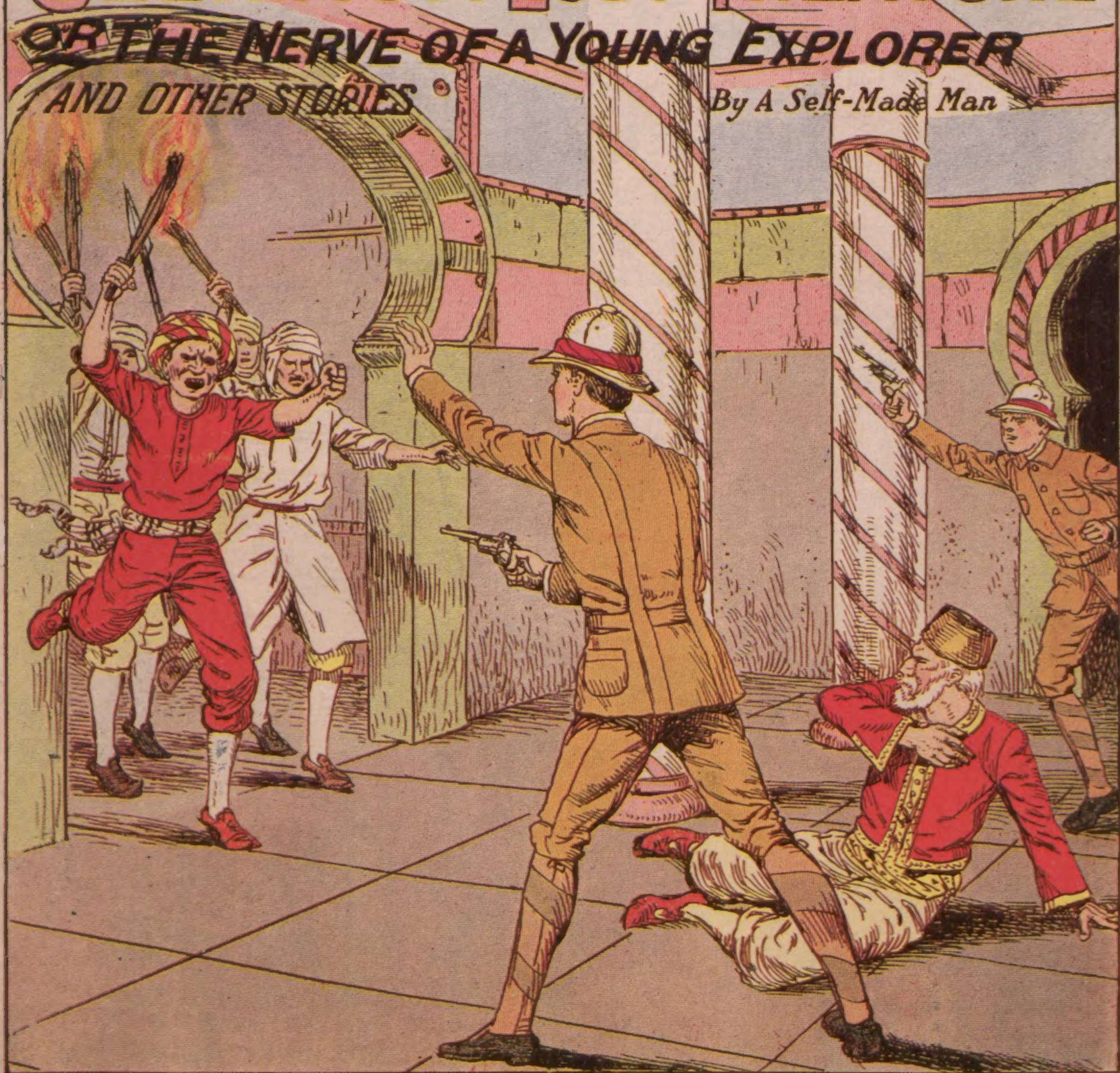
STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

SEEKING A LOST TREASURE

OR THE NERVE OF A YOUNG EXPLORER

AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



The lights of the torches drew nearer every moment; then the natives ran through the arch. Flinging up his hand and taking a firm grip on his pistol, the boy shouted:
"Stop! I'll shoot the first man who advances!"

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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Price 5 Cents.

SEEKING A LOST TREASURE

—OR—

THE NERVE OF A YOUNG EXPLORER

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

THE ANCIENT MARINER.

"I am the only white man who ever saw the hidden city of the Andes and lives to tell the tale," said the old sailor, wagging his head solemnly.

There was a sad, reminiscent look in the speaker's watery eyes, which seemed to indicate that if he chose to tell all he knew about his experiences in connection with the city aforesaid he could make his listeners' eyes bulge with wonder.

It was a radiant morning late in the spring.

Frank Dudley and his chum, Arthur Hale, two bright American boys, had come to the private wharf on the Dudley property, situated on the banks of the Hudson, not far from the town of Irvington, to fish, and there found the old sailor, with hook and line and basket, seated on the end of a string-piece, apparently in blissful unconsciousness that he was trespassing on private domains.

He was a square-built, grizzly, horny-handed son of Neptune, with a countenance bronzed to the color of mahogany from constant exposure to the sun and wind.

A short briar-wood pipe was stuck between his tobacco-stained lips, and a suspicious-looking, round-bellied bottle reposed by his side.

It was hard to say which was the more highly colored—the point of his large, luminous nose or the bowl of his pipe; both were fine examples in their way, and showed what constant practice will accomplish in the ornamental line.

A pair of particularly bright eyes glowed beneath the rim of a well-worn hat, and he had cocked these upon the two boys as they came upon the wharf.

He had no right on the private dock, and Frank Dudley, when he first saw him, intended to give him a broad hint to that effect; but on second thought he didn't.

They had hardly cast their own lines into the river before the ancient mariner commenced to talk to them.

He said his name was Tom Cox, and wanted to know what theirs was.

They obliged him, though Arthur Hale whispered to his chum that he thought the intruder had a great cheek.

The fish didn't bite very well on this occasion, and the boys would soon have tired of the diversion but for the fact that the old sailor was in a talkative mood and entertained them with a stock of astonishing yarns which he emphatically declared were founded on his own personal experiences during fifty years' wanderings about the world.

Finally something reminded him of the city of La Paz, in Bolivia, and then he told the boys that thirty years before he

had accompanied a party who attempted the ascent of Mount Illimani in the Andes range.

He had got separated from the bunch, and subsequently losing his footing on the snow-encrusted ground, had slid down the mountain-side to an unknown depth without injuring himself in the least.

While trying to extricate himself from the mountains he only succeeded in making his way further into the range.

Eventually, thousands of feet below the snow line, he had unexpectedly come upon a town, the houses of which were built entirely of pure silver, or some burnished stone resembling that metal.

The town was buried, he said, in a green and fertile valley in the very heart of the Andes range, at no great distance from the elevated city of La Paz.

The inhabitants he discovered were descendants of the Incas of Peru.

They had no more knowledge of the outside world than the outside world had of them.

They were born, lived and died in the valley ever since their ancestors, generations before, settled there.

Cox at this point in his yarn made the assertion with which this chapter opens.

"What an old liar this fellow is!" whispered Arthur Hale in his companion's ear.

The ancient mariner regarded the boy with suspicion, as if he had some idea of what was passing in the lad's mind.

"It must have been a wonderful town," remarked Frank, with a sober face.

"It was the most wonderful town I ever saw in my life, and I've seen several since I first went to sea," replied Mr. Cox, with equal gravity.

"And you say the houses were built of pure silver?"

"If it wasn't silver, it was something that looked jest like it," replied the ancient mariner, nodding his head sagely.

"And were the door-knobs and other little things of that kind made of pure gold?" asked Arthur, with an unbelieving grin.

"No, they weren't," snapped the old sailor. "There weren't no door-knobs, nor no doors, neither."

"Didn't you see any gold at all?" asked Arthur, surprised that the sailor did not include that precious metal in his yarn.

"Sure I did. There was gold cups, and gold ornaments, and all kinds of gold gimcracks."

"And did you bring a few away with you?" went on Arthur, with a sly twinkle in his eye.

"No, I didn't," answered the sailor, shortly.

"I should if I had been in your shoes."

Mr. Cox gave a snort of disgust.

"I was lucky to get away with a whole skin, without thinkin' about no sich nonsense," he said emphatically.

"How did you manage to make your escape, Mr. Cox?" asked Frank.

"I jest walked out of the valley one mornin' after I'd been there a week with a bundle of food strapped to my back, and climbed the mountain passes in the direction I thought La Paz was, and after a week's wanderin' I met a native Injun, who directed me how to find my way to the city."

"I suppose you told all about your adventure when you reached La Paz?" said Frank.

"I did, of course."

"And what did the people say?"

"They said there was a legend about a silver city buried in the heart of the Andes, but no man had ever been there and come back again."

"But you had been there and come back, hadn't you?"

"Sure I had; but no one believed me. They said it didn't stand to reason; that Americans had a great imagination, and so on. They didn't exactly call me a liar, but I could tell that they thought I was one."

"It's too bad that you didn't bring back some evidence of the buried city with you," remarked Frank.

"I was lucky to bring myself back."

"And that was thirty years ago?"

The ancient mariner nodded.

"And I s'pose the buried city is there yet?"

"I reckon it is."

"Unless it's been swallowed up by an earthquake."

The old sailor nodded again.

"You say you lived at the place for a week?" said Frank.

Another nod from the old man.

"What kind of people were the inhabitants?"

"Sort of copper-colored."

"How did they dress?"

"Most of the men went naked, except for a kind of breech-cloth. They wore a band of silver or white metal about their heads, and carried spears when not workin' in the fields. That was the common herd. The big-bugs wore long gowns of white cloth, had a gold band around their heads, and wore ornaments sich as armlets and wristlets, with precious stones stuck into them accordin' to their rank."

"And what about the women?"

"The women folks dressed in white cloth, too. They wore armlets, and wristlets, and head bands, either of gold or silver, accordin' to how important they was. They also wore earrings, and necklaces, and finger rings."

"How were you treated while you were there?"

"Bang-up; but I got an idea they meant to burn me up on one of their altars; that's why I made tracks away from the place."

"Burn you up, eh? Why?"

"As a part of their religious rites."

"What kind of worship did they have?"

"Seemed to be a kind of sun worship, as near as I kin remember."

"The ancient Peruvians revered the sun as the source of their royal dynasty, didn't they?" put in Hale, looking at his friend.

"I believe they did," replied Frank. "I know I read that their Temple of the Sun, in Pizarro's time, was the most magnificent edifice in the empire. If they had any intention of burning you up as a victim to their god, it's a wonder they let you get away from their clutches."

"I reckon they didn't think I could get away."

"They kept a watch on you, I suppose?"

"If they did, it wasn't a very good one, for when I made up my mind to leave I found no trouble in skiddooin'."

"You had to climb up through the mountains to reach La Paz, which is nearly twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea?" put in Arthur.

The ancient mariner nodded.

"How did you know what direction to go in?"

"I didn't know. Just took my chance."

"You must have had a nice time of it. Supposing you'd gone in the wrong direction, where would you have fetched up at?"

"I reckon I'd died of starvation."

"It's a wonder you didn't organize an expedition to go in search of the silver city. You must have had some idea where it was after having been there."

"Young man, I wasn't a fool," replied the old man, regarding Arthur severely. "Even if I'd been rash enough to want to go huntin' for it, I couldn't have found anybody willin' to go along with me."

At that moment the ancient mariner had a bite, and he drew up a very small specimen of the finny tribe.

The boys laughed at his look of disgust as he removed it from the hook and cast it back into the water.

Evidently he had had enough of fishing, in that particular spot at least, for he coiled up his line, put the round-bellied bottle and small string of fish into his basket, and seemed ready to leave the wharf.

The boys also wound up their lines, Frank picking up the half-dozen fish they had jointly secured.

"We'll see you to-morrow, maybe," remarked Frank, as the three walked up the wharf. "I should like to hear more about the silver city."

"All right, young gents," leered the ancient mariner. "I'll be proud and happy to tell you all I kin remember."

They parted from the old man at the head of the dock, and, though they came down next morning at the same hour, and for many mornings thereafter, they never set eyes on the old sailor again, nor could they find any signs of him in the neighborhood, nor find anybody who had noticed him in those parts.

He had vanished as suddenly as he had appeared, and the boys agreed that his advent and departure were as mysterious as was his remarkable narrative of the buried city of the Bolivian Andes.

CHAPTER II.

THE ABDUCTION.

Frank Dudley and Arthur Hale were sons of well-to-do residents of the village of Irvington-on-the-Hudson, and they lived close together.

They attended a military school in the neighborhood, as day scholars, and were regarded by the faculty as two of the brightest pupils.

Frank, who was captain of one of the companies, pitcher of the baseball team, and quarter-back and captain of the football eleven, was easily the most popular boy in the academy, while Arthur Hale was a close second.

Mr. George Dudley, Frank's father, was a prominent civil engineer.

He was employed by the Panama Canal Commission, and was at the Isthmus in charge of a certain part of the work then under construction.

It had been arranged that Frank and his friend Arthur were to spend part of their summer vacation at the Isthmus with Mr. Dudley, then go to the town of Panama and take the steamer for San Francisco, returning East by rail.

Frank and his chum were delighted with the prospect before them, and could talk of little else during the remainder of the school term.

The time finally arrived for them to go to New York City and take one of the Pacific Mail Company's steamers for Colon.

The site of Colon is by nature a rank tropical swamp, and most of the houses are built, like prehistoric lake dwellings, on piles in a black swamp.

To the boys, on their arrival, it seemed a most unattractive-looking port.

Mr. Dudley was on hand to greet them, and he took them to the best hotel in the place, where he stopped himself.

Next day he carried the boys out to the scene of operations on the canal.

Here they saw hundreds of Colombians and Chinamen at work in gangs of fifty or less, in charge of native foremen.

At first the boys were much interested in watching what was going on at this busy hive of industry.

Along the line of the railroad, too, they saw ample evidence of the wreck of the French Panama Canal operations in the fields of abandoned machinery, much of it never put together, and more put together, but never used—the whole invaded by tropical growth, and standing on the edge of the rank swamp through which the track runs.

"I've heard it said that the French company spent three hundred millions in five years," remarked Frank, as he and Arthur were looking at a long row of abandoned dredges in the water. "In my opinion it was the most gigantic case of graft on record."

"I'll bet it was," replied Arthur, with a grin. "If I were a politician all this devastation would make me green with envy."

On the third day after their arrival at the Isthmus the boys were introduced to a fine-looking American gentleman named

Alfred Seabury, who immediately invited them to spend a week at his place, which was ten miles from the town of Bujio, on the Panama railroad.

Mr. Dudley was well acquainted with Mr. Seabury, and consequently he had no objection to the boys accepting the invitation.

Accordingly, on the following morning, Mr. Seabury and the two boys took the morning train, which ran through to Panama, forty-five miles from Colon, and, after a brief halt at the station and village of Gatón, on the Chagres River, went on to Bujio, where they alighted from the cars.

A handsome, American-made, two-seated wagon, with a light cover to ward off the sun's rays, was waiting at the station, with a native driver.

"Get in, boys," said Mr. Seabury. "We've a ten-mile drive before us; but the road is good, and the country much more interesting than what you have just seen along the railroad."

"I'm glad to hear that, sir," replied Frank; "for I've never seen a worse-looking country than that part of the Isthmus we've already been over."

"That's my opinion, too, Mr. Seabury. The village of Gatón, where the train stopped for a few minutes, seems to be made up of rows of plank huts with iron roofs, as like one another as peas in a pod, the only exception being a corrugated iron church in the center."

"You'll find a great improvement on all that out where I live; but you can't expect to find things like they are in the States," replied the gentleman, with a smile.

It took about an hour and a half to reach Mr. Seabury's property, which was situated just within the canal zone or new State of Panama.

It was a cross between an American high-class farm and a Spanish hacienda.

The house was one of the most pretentious in the neighborhood, and built to conform to the requirements of the climate.

Mrs. Seabury was a handsome woman, a native Colombian, and she welcomed the young visitors in a broken English that fell charmingly from her lips.

The Seaburys had one child, a golden-haired little beauty of ten years, named Bessie—the idol of her parents and the pet of the hacienda.

Frank took a great fancy to her at once, and Bessie appeared to return the feeling with interest.

The boys were shown over the place, and found a great deal to interest them.

The estate had been laid out with an eye to landscape gardening.

Charming arbors were erected at pretty points of view.

Under the shadow of splendid trees they found a brick-lined swimming bath, excavated in the ground, with a little bathing-house built beside it, and a streamlet flowing through—an ideal place for a plunge.

"If the young seniors would like to go in the water they will find bathing dresses in the house," said their conductor, a man by the name of Enrique, who was a kind of majordomo on the estate.

As it was a steaming hot day, the boys eagerly availed themselves of the opportunity, and were soon disporting in the pond.

"I say, this is great," exclaimed Arthur, after taking a header from the spring-board. "You couldn't improve on this anywhere."

"That's right, nodded Frank. "I'll race you to that staging yonder."

"It's a go," cried Arthur. "One, two, three—go!"

Frank won by a head.

They stayed in fifteen minutes, and felt greatly refreshed after their bath.

"We'll have a go at this twice a day while we remain here," said Arthur, as he dressed himself. "I wouldn't miss it for a farm."

"What's the nearest town to this place?" Frank asked Mr. Seabury on the afternoon of the third day of their visit.

"Bujio. I'd take you to see it, as it's a typical Colombian town, only for the fact that the country is a bit disturbed over the ceding of this ten-mile strip of territory for canal purposes to the United States under the nominal title of the State of Panama, and the Colombians are a bit hot over it. They've been threatening to resort to arms to recover it, which, of course, would be very foolish on their part. At any rate, they've taken a temporary dislike to Americans on account of the matter, and for that reason I'd rather not take you to Bujio."

Bessie was sitting in Frank's lap, with her golden head on his shoulder in a most confiding way.

"Why don't you run and play with your dogs, Bessie?" said her father. "Don't you see them sitting yonder waiting for you to romp with them?"

Bessie, with reluctance, left her new friend, jumped off the wide balcony, and calling to her three pets, who sprang toward her the moment she appeared on the grass, began to make them go through their favorite tricks.

Mr. Seabury and the two boys watched her from their chairs on the balcony.

Bessie was just making one of her canine pets stand on its hind legs, when a bright flash, followed by a puff of white smoke and a loud report, came from a patch of green shrubbery that bordered the lawn.

The child uttered a thrilling scream, and the dog she had been holding up by his front paws fell dead on the ground.

"My heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Seabury, springing to his feet, an example followed by the surprised boys. "What does that mean?"

The three had hardly risen from their chairs, when a hatless, dark-featured man rushed out from the shrubbery and sprang at the little girl as she stood stupefied and dazed, looking at her dead pet.

He snatched Bessie in his arms and made for the road as fast as his legs could carry him.

CHAPTER III.

AT BAY.

Mr. Seabury, white with excitement and anxiety, dashed after the man, who was carrying away the screaming child in his arms.

Frank and Arthur followed close at his heels.

They were both staggered by the incident, which they could not understand.

The man and child vanished through the gate, and when the distracted father reached the road he saw the abductor spring with his little prisoner on the back of a horse and gallop off toward Bujio at headlong speed.

At that moment Enrique ran up with a shotgun in his hands, which he leveled across the gate at the fleeing rascal.

"You will hit my child," exclaimed Mr. Seabury, staying his hand. "He is bound for Bujio, and we must follow him on horseback."

"It is that scoundrel Carlo Sarrogog, whom you turned away last week for theft," almost howled the old servant, with whom Bessie was a great favorite. "He shot at the child, missing her and killing the dog; and then, to make sure of his revenge, he has carried her off with him. He is a bad man. I will get horses while you get your revolvers. We will catch him before he reaches the town, and I will kill him as I would a—"

"Yes, yes!" interrupted Mr. Seabury, half frantic over his loss. "We will follow him at once. Quick, Enrique, bring the horses and let us be off!"

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Frank, as the owner of the place and his sturdy old servant hurried away. "This is tough on Mr. Seabury."

"Bet your life it is," replied Arthur.

"I feel like taking a hand in this myself," said his chum. "I can't bear the idea of that little girl being at the mercy of such a ruffian. I'm afraid he'll get clear off while they're getting ready to pursue him."

"I don't see what we can do in the matter. We can't run after him on foot."

"No," replied Frank, with flashing eye and bated breath, "we can't, that's true. If we only had a pair of horses."

"Or a bicycle apiece," supplemented Arthur.

The words were hardly out of their mouths before a couple of horsemen dashed around a turn in the road leading from Bujio and presently drew up before the boys.

"Is Senor Seabury at home?" inquired one of the riders in English.

"Yes, sir," replied Frank. Then he added quickly: "We'll take your horses."

The gentlemen dismounted and started to walk up the driveway.

"Now is our chance," said Frank to Arthur, in a tense tone. "We can't stand on ceremony. Every moment counts. Mount the other horse and we'll start after that rascal Sarrogog, if we have to follow him all the way to Bujio, where Mr. Seabury believes he is bound."

"All right, Frank," replied Arthur, promptly. "I'm with you."

In their enthusiasm the boys forgot that the abductor of little Bessie was armed with a revolver; but even if they had recollected it we doubt if that fact would have deterred them from making this effort to rescue the little girl.

The boys leaped on the animals, and digging their heels into their flanks, started them at a hot pace on the road to Bujio.

The boys had covered perhaps six miles of the distance to Bujio, when, as they rounded an elevated turn in the road, Frank, who was a dozen lengths in advance, caught sight of Serrogog in the distance, with the child seated in front of him on the horse's neck.

Serrogog disappeared around a distant bend in the road, his animal giving signs of distress.

Frank lashed his horse with the bridle-rein and bent low over his neck.

The beast responded with a fresh burst of speed, and the boy soon reached the turn around which the abductor had vanished.

He was just in time to see the villain dismount in front of a roadside house and, with Bessie in his arms, lead the animal through a gate.

Frank at once reined in and waited for Arthur to come up.

"Stop!" he cried, grabbing at his chum's arm.

"What's the matter?" asked Arthur, pulling in.

"We must go slow now," said Frank. "The fellow has stopped at yonder house and gone into the yard. Draw up alongside the hedge here and we'll consider what we had better do."

"I thought he was going on to Bujio," said Arthur, following the example of his companion, who had dismounted.

"His horse has given out," replied Frank, "and he has taken refuge in that house. No doubt he is known there, and it won't do for us to run into a hornets' nest. It's growing dark fast. We'll wait here for a while and watch the road to see he doesn't make a new start with a fresh horse. Mr. Seabury and old Enrique ought to be along presently. Then the four of us can storm the building together."

So they waited, giving their mounts a needed breathing spell.

Thus fifteen minutes passed away, and still there was no sign of Mr. Seabury and his faithful old servant.

"They ought to be here by this time," said Frank. "I don't think we could have got over ten minutes' start of them."

Another five minutes passed, and still there was no sound of horses' feet in the road behind them.

"Maybe they've taken a short cut to Bujio," suggested Arthur.

"I don't think there is such a thing, for if there was, surely Serrogog would have taken it himself. He ought to know the country as well as any one."

"That's right," answered Arthur; "he ought."

It was now as dark as it ever would be that night, and the boys had walked their horses close up to the roadside house.

They saw a light shining from a second-story window, and also lights on the ground floor.

"Well, what are we going to do?" asked Arthur, at length.

"You hold my horse," replied Frank. "I am going forward to investigate."

Then he pushed his way through the hedge and disappeared.

He made his way cautiously to the rear of the house, where there were no lights, and tried one of the doors.

It opened at his touch, and he entered the place as softly as he could.

The building was only a two-story affair, like many of the houses in tropical countries, where earthquakes are a common occurrence.

The lower floor seemed to consist of a public drinking room in front, and a kitchen and other living apartments behind.

The sleeping rooms were above where Frank was aiming for.

He opened the first door he came to and found the room untenanted.

He then tried the next room, and was disappointed to see no sign of Bessie.

A third room, overlooking the back yard, was next tried.

A cheap kind of lamp burned dimly on a plain wooden table.

As Frank's eyes roved around the room his heart gave a great bound, for there, stretched upon a bed, lay Bessie, apparently unconscious.

"Now to carry her away without the people in the house getting wind of my movements," thought the plucky boy, as he closed the door behind him and crept to the bed.

A Mauser rifle stood near a chest of drawers close by, and Frank seized and cocked it, ready for an emergency.

Then he shook Bessie softly, holding his hand above her mouth to stifle any frightened cry she might utter at being aroused.

She made no movement, however, and the boy looked at her in some alarm.

He bent down and found that she was breathing heavily.

He shook her harder than before, but she appeared under the influence of some drug.

"The villain has stupefied her in some manner," he thought, raising the girl in his arms.

At that moment he thought he heard sounds in the hallway below.

Fearing that his retreat was cut off, he turned to the window, opened it and looked out.

It was only a short jump to the ground below, but the question was, could he do it without injuring Bessie?

While he was considering the matter the door of the room was thrown open and Serrogog entered.

He took in the situation at a glance, and his surprise for the moment held him spellbound to the spot.

The momentary inaction on his part was all that saved Frank's life.

With an oath, and some inquiry in Spanish, unintelligible to Frank, he drew his revolver and raised it to fire.

But the boy comprehended his danger in the twinkling of an eye and, dropping Bessie on the bed, grabbed up the rifle.

Serrogog, with an oath of rage, pulled the trigger of his weapon, and a loud report rang through the house, startling its other inmates.

The bullet hummed past Frank's ear.

The boy, seeing that his life was in grave peril, for the rascal was cocking his revolver for a second shot, raised the rifle quickly and fired, with scarcely any aim.

Serrogog clapped his hand to his breast, spun half around, with a terrible cry, and fell headlong to the floor.

At that thrilling moment two fierce-looking men appeared at the open doorway.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RESCUE IN PANAMA BAY.

Frank, now full of fight, from his toes up, covered the two men with the rifle.

"Throw up your hands!" he roared in a tone of voice that showed he meant business.

The two men made no effort to comply with the command, as they did not understand a word he had said.

They did understand, however, that they were in danger of being shot, and both made a jump to get out of range.

They collided and went sprawling on the floor as Frank fired at them without effect.

At that moment the front door was burst in downstairs with a crash that rang through the building and raised screams from a couple of women.

"I hope that's Mr. Seabury and Enrique, with Arthur," breathed Frank, rushing toward the door and covering the men, who had tried ineffectually to make their escape from the room.

"Frank! Frank!" came ringing up to him from below in his chum's well-known tones.

"Hellow, Art!" he roared back through the open door. "I'm upstairs."

Immediately there were hurried steps on the stairs, and presently Enrique, followed by Mr. Seabury, Arthur and the two gentlemen whom the boys had deprived of their horses in so summary a manner, appeared at the entrance of the room.

Enrique pounced upon the fallen rascals, while Mr. Seabury sprang into the room.

"My Bessie?" he ejaculated feverishly.

"She is safe," replied Frank, pointing to the bed.

"Thank heaven!" cried the gentlemen fervently, rushing up to the bed and raising the child in his arms. "Bessie, darling, speak to me. Speak to papa!"

But it was out of her power to do so, for she had been drugged.

"Great heavens!" cried Mr. Seabury, in agony. "What can be the matter with her?"

The other two gentlemen stepped forward at that moment, and one of them, after looking at Bessie, said she had evidently been stupefied with some preparation to keep her quiet.

"The infernal rascal!" cried the excited father. "To do such a thing to my poor child! Where is the scoundrel?"

"I had to shoot him to save my life, sir," spoke up Frank, pointing at the motionless figure of the abductor, as he laid near the door with cocked revolver still clutched in his right hand.

"You did right, young man," said Mr. Seabury. "Is he dead?"

"No," replied one of the gentlemen, who was kneeling by his side, with his hand over the rascal's heart. "He is not dead, but he is badly wounded. The rifle ball passed entirely through his body. It will require the opinion of a surgeon to pass upon his chances of recovery."

"Such villains are better under ground," said Bessie's father. "You are a plucky lad, Frank Dudley."

As a matter of fact, Serrogog did recover in the end, though he had a narrow squeak for his life.

He lay for weeks on his bed, and when well enough he was put in jail, duly tried for his crime, convicted, and passed many years of his life in a Colombian prison at hard labor—a fate he richly deserved.

A week later the boys, having tired of Colon and the Panama Canal, took the train for the town of Panama, on the Pacific side of the Isthmus.

This place has some of the dignity and picturesqueness of an old Spanish city, and the boys found it a decided improvement over Colon.

They had a week to wait before they could get a steamer for San Francisco, but they did not think time would hang very heavy on their hands during that interval, for there was a good deal to interest them in the place.

On the second day of their stay the boys hired a small, American-built sailboat and went out on the bay.

Frank was an expert boatman, and Arthur was almost his equal, so that they did not hesitate to take this sail in strange waters.

They shaped their course for a pretty, wooded island about a mile and a half off the town.

"Here comes a sailboat around yonder point of the island," said Arthur, pointing the craft out to his companion.

"I see it. Whoever is handling her seems to be a pretty rocky navigator," answered Frank, watching the wobbling girations of the boat.

"She'll be over in a brace of shakes if that chap doesn't look out," said Art, presently.

The words were hardly out of his mouth before the catastrophe happened.

The sailboat heeled over on her beam ends and spilled her passengers—a dark-skinned native and a white boy—into the bay.

"We must pick them up," said Frank, steering the boat in the direction of the two unfortunates.

The native swam lustily toward the partly overturned craft, and soon succeeded in climbing up on her hull and supporting himself by the guy rope that held the mast taut.

The boy was not so fortunate.

"While still a dozen yards away the boy weakened and sank out of sight.

"He's gone," cried Arthur, excitedly.

"Oh, he'll be up in a moment. Grab that boat-hook and stand ready to hook onto him when he comes to the surface."

Arthur snatched up the boat-hook and gazed eagerly out over the waves.

"There he is now," exclaimed Frank, pointing, at the same time moving the tiller a bit to port.

The boy was sinking for the second time, when Hale inserted the hook under the collar of his jacket and drew him a foot out of the water.

With Frank's assistance Arthur hauled the almost unconscious boy into the boat and laid him face down in the cockpit, while Frank headed for the overturned craft to take off the other victim of the disaster.

The boy they had rescued presently showed signs of recovery.

He turned over on his back and then sat up, rubbing the water out of his eyes.

"How do you feel?" asked Arthur, at last.

"I feel rather shaky," replied the boy. "I'm awfully obliged to you chaps. You've saved my life. I held out as long as I could, but I'm not much of a swimmer. If it hadn't been that you came to my aid I should surely have been drowned."

"We're mighty glad we reached you in time. It would have been hard luck if you had been lost."

"It would have been rough on my governor if I had been drowned. He lost mother a year ago, and I'm the only one he's got left. My name is Fred Leslie. What's your name?"

"My name is Arthur Hale, and this is my chum, Frank Dudley."

"Glad to know you both. You are Americans, aren't you?" "We are. We live at Irvington-on-the-Hudson, in New York State, when we're at home. And you?"

"I'm English," young Leslie replied. "My father is the Hon. Edward Leslie, M. P. We are on the way to La Paz, Bolivia, to do the mountains."

"You don't say!" answered Arthur.

Their conversation was interrupted by Frank calling on his friend to lend a hand to help the native Colombian out of his unpleasant predicament.

In a few moments the man was safe aboard the sailboat, and Frank, bringing their craft about on the other tack, headed for shore.

CHAPTER V.

OFF FOR BOLIVIA.

"Who was steering the boat when she upset?" asked Frank.

"I was," replied Leslie, looking a bit sheepish. "I thought I knew the ropes well enough, but I guess I'm not as good a sailor as I thought I was. You seem to understand how to manage this craft all right," he added admiringly.

"Art and I know enough to keep a boat right side up in most any kind of blow short of a hurricane. We live close to the water, and we spend a good part of our time on the Hudson. By the way, I think you said you were going down to Bolivia?"

"Yes," replied Fred Leslie.

"I wish we were going along with you, instead of back to the United States on the next steamer."

"I'd like to have you chaps go along first rate. Maybe it could be arranged. My governor will be glad to take you, after what you've done for me this morning. Where are you lodged?"

"Art and I are stopping at the Panama House."

"Not alone?" asked the boy, in some surprise.

"Yes. My father is one of the engineers of the Canal Commission. We came down to the Isthmus to take a look around. We're now on our way to San Francisco."

"Your father down here, too?" asked Leslie, turning to Hale.

"No. My father is in New York. He's a civil engineer, too, and partner of Frank's father."

"Any special reason why you should get back home right away?" asked their new friend.

"Oh, no. We've got about eight weeks vacation yet ahead of us. We expect to stop a week or two in San Francisco before we start East."

"Well, if there's no reason why you have to get home under two months, you might just as well come to Bolivia with the governor and me. It would be real jolly, don't you know, the three of us. We're only going to remain a short time in the neighborhood of La Paz. The governor is quite an expert mountain climber. He's been up the Matterhorn, in Switzerland, and on some of the tallest peaks in the Alps. He's anxious to make the ascent of Illimani, and, if he has time, Sorata."

"Do you mean to say that you and your father have come all the way from England en route to Bolivia just to climb a certain mountain?" asked Frank.

"Yes. And to see Lake Titicaca, and to go up the corkscrew railway, as I call it. I shall enjoy the trip ever so much better if you chaps will only come along. It shan't cost you a penny, either. I say, now, you'll promise to come if the thing can be fixed up with your governor, won't you?" asked the young Englishman, eagerly.

"I'm not so certain that it can be arranged," replied Frank. "If it could be, I'm with you, and so is Art here. If your father made a personal visit on my father and put the matter squarely before him, saying that he'd look after us, the matter might be brought about. Otherwise there's not much chance of it."

"My governor will do that to oblige me, and also because he'll be very grateful to you both for saving my life."

"Don't say any more about that, Leslie," said Frank. "We couldn't do less for you than what we did. We should have done the same for any one under the circumstances."

The boat shot up alongside of the landing, and the boys, as well as the native Colombian, landed.

"Come with me to our hotel," said Leslie, taking both of his

friends by their arms. "I want to introduce you to my governor right away."

They found the Hon. Mr. Leslie, who was a fine specimen of an athletic English gentleman, in the rotunda of the hotel, reading a British newspaper.

Fred introduced his new friends to him, and the gentleman expressed the pleasure he felt at making their acquaintance.

When Fred told him that the boys had saved his life in the bay a short time previous, Mr. Leslie began to regard the bright young American lads in quite a new light.

He expressed his grateful appreciation of the service they had rendered his son, and hoped they should know each other better.

Fred soon introduced the subject nearest to his heart—that his new friends should go with them to La Paz, in Bolivia, instead of returning immediately to the United States, according to their present programme.

Mr. Leslie said he would be very happy to include them in his party, and that the little trip wouldn't cost them a penny.

"We would like to go to South America very much, sir," said Frank; "but, of course, we couldn't think of doing so without my father's permission."

Mr. Leslie promised to use his influence in persuading Mr. Dudley to give his consent to Frank and Arthur making the journey to Bolivia.

Mr. Dudley, however, much to Frank's and Arthur's delight, gave his consent, and so one July morning the party left Panama on the steamer Peru, bound down the South American coast.

About three hundred miles south of Guayaquil the steamer came to anchor in the roadstead of Payta, in Peru, a dead-and-alive place, built of bamboo huts.

A few days later Mr. Leslie and the boys landed at Callao just in time to catch the evening train for Lima.

"To-morrow you'll have the greatest experience you ever had in your life," said Fred, as the boys took chairs on the hotel portico after dinner.

"What's that?" asked Frank and Arthur simultaneously.

"We're going to make the ascent to the crest of the Andes by the Oroya Railway, which, starting from sea-level, takes you in nine hours to an altitude somewhat higher than that of the summit of Mont Blanc."

"That will be something to talk about when we get home, Art," remarked Frank.

Mr. Leslie and the boys boarded the train at an early hour next morning, and the train pulled out of town by a valley leading inland and began to climb the mountain range.

Late in the afternoon, after traversing many corkscrew tunnels, spider-legged bridges and narrow ravines, they arrived at the summit, fourteen thousand feet above the level of the sea, where they were treated to a magnificent expanse of snow-covered mountain scenery that amply repaid them for the inconveniences attending the trip.

Two days later they were aboard the steamer again, sailing southward.

Sixteen days after leaving Panama the vessel anchored in Mollendo.

The passengers and baggage were taken ashore in barges through a narrow opening in the reef.

In the morning Mr. Leslie and the boys took a train for the interior.

At sunset they reached Arequipa station, where they had to wait four days for the weekly train which goes up to Lake Titicaca.

Starting early in the morning, they arrived at Puno about dark, and boarded a little steamer for the trip across the lake, which is the largest in South America.

At eight o'clock on the following evening the steamer anchored off the Bolivian port of Chililaya.

"What kind of four-wheeled contrivance do you call that?" asked Arthur, pointing to a covered wagon drawn by four mules, when they disembarked next morning.

"That," replied Fred, "is the tilbury I told you about in Panama."

"Do we ride in one of them?" asked Frank.

"We ride to La Paz in that very one. My governor telegraphed for it to meet us here."

"It looks like my idea of a wild western shake-down," grinned Arthur.

"It will never hold together if we've got any rough traveling to do," said Frank, casting a doubtful glance at the old rig, the harness of which was no less antique than the wagon itself, and was patched in numberless places with pieces of cord.

"It will hold together better than you think," replied Fred. "Tumble aboard, for here comes my governor."

With much shouting and cracking of his whip the driver got the team in motion, and off they went at a brisk pace.

"They ought to have a sprinkling-cart on this road," grumbled Arthur. "It's simply the worst ever."

"Yes, it's pretty bad," admitted Fred.

"And I've never had such a bumping in my life as I'm getting in this wagon."

"You mustn't mind that, Art," laughed Frank. "Just be thankful you're alive."

"How much more is there of this sort of thing?" asked Arthur, at length, as the team, at reduced speed, made its way up a long, gentle slope that hid all view ahead.

Fred appealed to his father for information, and Mr. Leslie spoke to the driver.

"La Paz is right ahead over the rise in the valley below," was the substance of the man's response.

Suddenly the two leading mules disappeared over the edge of the rise and turned sharply to the left.

As the wagon followed them the party found themselves without warning on the edge of a cliff which dropped some sixteen hundred feet to a great basin, that looked like the crater of some enormous volcano—a basin ten miles or so in diameter, with a valley stretching upward to the mountains, and another stretching downward to a remote distance.

"There's La Paz now," shouted Fred, in some excitement, and his companions gazed downward to see a great red-roofed city spread out before them, while twenty-five miles away rose the glorious, isolated, snowy mass of Illimani—the mountain the Hon. Mr. Leslie had come all the way from England to climb.

The road down was well laid out in zigzags, down which the tilbury galloped at a fine pace, and in a short time the party entered the outskirts of the town.

CHAPTER VI.

RELICS OF THE PERUVIAN INCAS.

La Paz from above looks flat; when you get among its streets it is difficult to stand on the steeply inclined pavements.

The tilbury entered the town at what the boys thought to be a reckless pace.

"If an automobile cut up shines like this in a New York street there'd be something doing mighty soon," said Frank. "It's a wonder our wheels don't fly into disconnected spokes."

After swirling around one corner after another, a final dash brought the covered wagon into the great square of the town, and the team drew up before the Hotel La Paz.

The party was soon installed in excellent rooms, well furnished and thoroughly European in aspect.

Next morning Mr. Leslie and the boys were laid up with the sirocche, or mountain sickness, caused by the altitude they had reached.

In twenty-four hours they were as well as ever again.

Then Mr. Leslie began his preparations for the ascent of Mount Illimani, while the boys amused themselves by taking in the town.

"What shall we do with ourselves, fellows?" asked Arthur, with a yawn.

"I know what we might do, now that we're our own masters for a few days," said Frank, with a grin; "that is, if you chaps have any sand."

"Well, what might we do?" asked Arthur.

"We might go down the valley and have a hunt for the buried city of the Andes."

"The buried city of the Andes!" exclaimed Fred, in some surprise.

"Oh, you're joking, aren't you?" replied Arthur to his chum. "You don't mean to say that you take any stock in that yarn? Why, that old sailor was the rankest liar I ever listened to."

"What are you chaps talking about?" inquired Fred, curiously.

"We met an old sailor one morning fishing from the wharf on Frank's father's property, and he told us some stories about his experiences around the world that would have made Ananias, if he was alive, look like thirty cents. Among others, he said that he was right here in La Paz thirty years ago; that he started up the Illimani Mountain with a party

of climbers; got separated from the party, lost his footing in a crevasse, and fetched up several thousand feet below the snow-line. He tried to find his way out of the range, but got deeper in, and then the first thing he knew he discovered in a small valley a town built either of pure silver or some stone that looked like it, inhabited by the descendants of the Peruvian Incas. He told us how the people dressed, and a lot of other rot about them. Finally he managed to make his escape back to La Paz. He said he was the only white man who ever saw the hidden city of the Andes and lived to tell the tale. Now what do you think of that?"

"I think it very strange," replied Fred, thoughtfully.

"Strange!" exclaimed Arthur. "I don't see anything strange about it. The old rascal made the yarn up as he went along. I have often wondered what he took us for. I never thought Frank or I looked like a pair of chumps."

"I have a reason for saying I think it strange," said Fred, quietly. "A week before the governor and I left England I bought a book about the Andes at a second-hand store. I was eager to read up all I could on the subject, as I expected soon to see those wonderful mountains with my own eyes."

"Well?" said Frank, with a look of interest.

"The book contained quite a good deal about the Incas of Peru. You know how Pizarro conquered that country and made the Inca race subject to Spain?"

"Sure. I've read all about it," replied Frank.

"When Pizarro entered Peru he found the country occupied by two rival factions—the adherents of Huascar, the real heir to the crown, and the followers of Atahualpa, his half-brother. Pizarro, for reasons, sided with the latter and helped him whip Huascar. This prince was taken prisoner and put to death. His adherents and some of his family fled the country. History is silent as to where they went, though it was believed Bolivia was their destination. At any rate, this book said there is a legend that the descendants of Huascar settled in the wilds of the Bolivian Andes and founded the Silver City, which, however, no white man has ever seen, or, if any have, they never returned to civilization to tell the story of what the city was like."

"That legend seems to tally with the story told by the old sailor to Art and me, doesn't it?"

"It certainly does," replied Fred. "That's why I said it looked strange to me. Can it be possible that such a city really exists in the heart of these mountains?"

They talked the matter over until lunch hour, and were about as wise on the subject as when they started.

That afternoon they visited an old monastery on the outskirts of the town.

One of the fathers showed them about the institution.

The most interesting part of the old building was the museum.

This contained a great many specimens of native handiwork of early days.

There were also a number of unique and valuable ornaments fashioned out of pure silver, some of which were incrustated with precious stones.

One was a silver head-band, with a large topaz as a centerpiece.

Then there were several armlets and bracelets—the former heavy bands of pure silver, perfectly plain; the latter two inches in width, and brilliant with small diamonds in great profusion.

The boys wanted to know if these were relics of the Peruvian Incas.

The priest nodded.

"How long have they been in this monastery?" asked Frank.

"More than one hundred years," replied the monk.

"They put me in mind of the description of the ornaments which Tom Cox said were worn by the inhabitants of the buried city of the Andes," remarked Frank, turning toward his companions.

The monk pricked up his ears and turned a strange look on the boy.

"What do you know about this buried city?" he asked, almost eagerly.

"I'll tell you if you want to hear the story."

"The priest expressed a desire to listen to it, whereupon Frank narrated the alleged experiences of the ancient mariner in the Bolivian Andes thirty years before.

"There is a legend that a community of Incas, driven from Peru at the time of the conquest of that country by Pizarro, took refuge in a small valley in the heart of these Cordil-

leras," replied the monk solemnly. "Efforts were made two hundred years ago, and at rare intervals since, to determine the truth or falsity of the legend, but nothing ever came of it. Two of our monks made the attempt one hundred and sixteen years ago. They failed of their object, but they found those armlets, bracelets and head-band in an underground cavern far down in the range. Their supplies giving out, they were obliged to return, which they only succeeded in doing after a great deal of difficulty and almost incredible suffering. Nothing could induce them to renew the search. Since then other monks have gone in search of this phantom buried city, and have never returned. Many of the inhabitants of La Paz in times past have organized expeditions for the same purpose, but not one man of them all has ever come back to relate his experiences. The sailor from whom you heard the story which you have just related to me was probably gifted with a rare imagination and a good memory. It seems likely that he visited La Paz at some time in his life, heard the legend of the Silver City, as it is called; came to this monastery like any of our visitors and saw these relics; and then, recalling the incidents of his sojourn here, when in your company, put the story together, with such embellishments as a ready brain could contrive on the spur of the moment."

"Then you don't believe there is any real foundation in fact for the legend of the buried city of the Andes?" said Frank, disappointedly.

"Who shall say?" replied the monk, shrugging his shoulders.

And that was all they could get out of him, though the boys each made him a liberal donation, ostensibly for the good of the monastery.

CHAPTER VII.

IN THE WILDS OF THE ANDES.

The sight of the relics of the Peruvian Incas, brought by the two monks more than a hundred years before from the very depths of the Bolivian Andes, as well as the little the monk had said about the legend of the Silver City, fired the imaginations of the three boys.

Finally they decided to make a trip to the Convent of the Black Brotherhood, which was a two days' trip into the heart of the Andes, and see if they could learn anything there about the Silver City.

They spoke to the proprietor of the hotel, an Englishman, about it.

He said he would furnish them with an Indian guide, also a native Bolivian to carry such supplies as they would need.

The boys were enthusiastic over the expedition, and, knowing they had no time to lose, every arrangement was made for an early start on the following morning.

Each of the party was provided with a stout mule, and quite a few spectators around the square watched them mount their animals and start off in the cold morning air along the cobble-stoned street.

In a few minutes the town was left behind, and the road passed through a short, deep cutting, which had doubtless been worn down by ages of traffic.

The course they were now pursuing took them away from evidences of civilization, and they gradually penetrated into the wilds of the Andes, every mile seeming to carry them lower down.

The valley gradually narrowed to an immense gorge, where steep cliffs approached one another from both sides, and the scenery became wilder than ever.

"In twenty-four hours from now we ought to reach the Convent of the Black Brotherhood," said Frank. "That is as far from the mountains as our guide will take us."

"Perhaps the Black Brotherhood can tell us something more about the legend of the Silver City than we've learned so far," said Fred.

"If they know anything I'll bet they won't give it away," said Arthur.

Frank asked their guide, who could speak fair English, if the Convent of the Black Brotherhood was often visited by people from La Paz.

"Not often," he replied. "It is a tiresome thirty-six-hour trip to get there, and few care to attempt it."

"What kind of looking place is it?"

"A long, rambling building, built on the edge of an unfathomable precipice."

"It must be a nice spot to live."

The guide shrugged his shoulders and went on eating in silence.

"How would you like to spend the rest of your days in a place like this?" asked Frank of his companions, who had been listening.

"Excuse me," replied Arthur. "I prefer civilization."

"Do these monks ever go up to La Paz?" Frank asked the guide.

The man shook his head.

"They live and finally die out in this solitude?"

"Yes," replied the man.

"Why are they called the Black Brotherhood?"

"They dress in black gowns, with black hoods over their heads. They never speak once they enter the four walls of the convent."

"They must be a sociable set, upon my word," snickered Arthur.

"They use signs, I suppose," said Frank. "What is their object in living so far down the range, and out of the track of life?"

"Fasting and prayer."

"I should judge they stood a good chance of fasting, all right," grinned Arthur, "for I haven't seen any evidences of fertile ground for two hours."

"They live wholly on vegetables and fruit, which they grow in the neighborhood," said the guide.

"That's a healthy diet, at any rate," remarked Arthur.

"I suppose they live till they shrivel up and blow away?"

"They live to a good age, most of them. No one lives to be old in La Paz, for it is twelve thousand feet above the sea."

"They must have a pretty good-sized cemetery there, then. We'll have to take it in, fellows, when we get back."

They rested half an hour after finishing their meal, and then, remounting their mules, proceeded on down the mountain.

They traveled at a fair speed along a narrow, beaten track until darkness came upon them, catching them in a dreary-looking defile, where they started a fire and cooked a pot of coffee.

The air was quite chilly, but nothing like as cold as at La Paz.

After supper all hands wrapped themselves up in their ponchos and gradually dropped off to sleep.

Soon after sunrise breakfast was served, and then the journey toward the Convent of the Black Brotherhood was continued.

The scenery now was of the wildest and, in some respects, grandest to be met with in that section of the range.

As noon was coming on they suddenly emerged into a wide, amphitheater-like space, somewhat resembling one of the small Colorado canyons.

Their path led them around the face of the wall, along a path scarcely more than two feet wide, and it gave the boys a touch of the horrors to look down the sheer sides of the precipice, anywhere from fifteen hundred to twenty-five hundred feet deep.

"Gee! I don't like this for a copper cent," said Arthur, the perspiration oozing out of his hands and forehead through nervousness. "Suppose this mule of mine were to slip and go over? If I dared dismount, I'd get off and walk."

There was not much chance of dismounting after they had got started, like flies upon their trip around the amphitheater.

As for the mules, they didn't seem to mind it at all.

They were sure-footed, and there was not one chance in a hundred that they would slip.

The boys shut their eyes and trusted to luck and their four-footed carriers.

At last they reached the opposite defile in safety, and there drew a breath of great relief.

"I suppose we've got to return by the same road," said Arthur, with a kind of shudder. "That's the fiercest proposition I've ever been up against. I'd rather go through a long, dark tunnel any day."

"This will be something to tell about when we get home," said Frank, with a shaky sort of laugh.

"That was the finest sight I ever saw in my life," said Fred; "though I'm bound to say that I kept my eyes closed the greater part of the time. I only looked down three times during the trip, and it gave me the shivers each time."

"I should think it would. I tried it once, and that was

enough for me. I didn't dare try it again for fear I should fall off the mule's back," said Frank.

"Say, talk about something else, will you?" put in Arthur. "I'll bet I'll have a nightmare to-night over that spot."

They took their lunch beside a small waterfall in a romantic pass, and then resumed their journey.

As the shades of evening were falling upon the mountains they came to another series of giant precipices, down the sides of which they slowly pushed their way.

"Yonder is the Convent of the Black Brotherhood," said the guide to Frank, pointing to a low, rambling building perched upon the summit of a straggling rock below them.

The boys looked with a great deal of curiosity at the place where they were going to pass the night.

The crags of the Andes rose all around them, except at one point not far from the convent wall, when they broke away into a small green valley that was under cultivation.

At last they reached the outer gate of the convent, a kind of lodge, at which the guide rapped loudly.

Presently a face appeared at the wicket, then the gate swung open on great solid hinges, just as if they were expected, and the boys found themselves within the walls of the Convent of the Black Brotherhood.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MONASTERY OF THE BLACK BROTHERHOOD.

The monk who admitted them was dressed in a coarse black gown, held at the waist by a piece of rope which had been dyed black, and his head and face were concealed within the folds of a black hood.

He pulled a dangling rope that hung from the ceiling of the lodge, and a bell rang out three times on the still night air.

It was the signal that strangers had arrived to partake of the hospitality of the brotherhood for the night.

Presently two other monks, similarly attired, made their appearance, and each grasping the leading rope of a mule, led them into a courtyard, the boys and the two men following.

Not a word so far had been spoken, and the lads themselves were silent, under the impression that all conversation was barred, though such was not the case with respect to outsiders.

The visitors were led first to a lavatory, where they washed up, and then were conducted to a reception-room, where they were left alone.

It was a plain, rather cheerless-looking apartment, lighted by two narrow slits of windows placed out of reach.

The only illumination after dark was a swinging bronze lamp full of some kind of oil, on which a small taper floated.

As may be supposed, it gave out but a dull light, leaving the corner of the room in the grasp of the shadows.

"This is a queer old place, isn't it?" whispered Arthur. "Puts one in mind of an old dungeon."

"It does," replied Frank, in a low tone.

At that moment a tall, bony monk walked into the room as silently as a shadow and paused before them.

The guide, who was no stranger to the convent and its people, explained, in Spanish, not a word of which the boys understood, that the three lads had come from La Paz to visit the convent and pass the night there.

The superior nodded and left the room as he came.

"What a ghostly-looking chap that was," said Arthur. "Is he the boss of the place?"

The guide said he was, and added that they would presently be conducted to the refectory or eating-hall.

In a short time another black-robed monk appeared and made a sign for them to follow him.

He led them to a room with a low ceiling of rafters only, the furniture of which consisted of a long table surrounded with three-legged stools.

At one end five plates were spread, with knives and forks, cups, saucers and spoons, all of the plainest description.

The visitors took their places at the table and were waited on by another monk.

When the party had ate all they wished, another monk appeared and led them to the bell tower, whence they had a view in the moonlight of the great black void on the edge of which the building stood.

"I shouldn't want to drop down into that awful depth," remarked Fred, as he hung over the wooden parapet.

"I should say not," replied Arthur.

Then they looked up and around at the wild, precipitous crags of the great Andes standing out in bold relief in the moonshine, or lost in the deepest of shadows.

Each of the visitors was shown to a separate, cage-like room, fitted with a small iron bedstead and a three-legged stool.

The novelty of the situation kept Frank awake for some time.

Every quarter of an hour a bell clanged softly somewhere out in the courtyard.

Following the fourth quarter the hour was tolled.

Frank heard the bell twice, then he fell into a dreamless sleep, from which he awoke to find the sun shining through the slit of a window that opened above the precipice.

He dressed himself and made his way to the lavatory, where he found Arthur before him.

The guide and the other man soon appeared.

There were no signs, however, of Fred.

A monk soon appeared and ushered them into the refectory again, where their breakfast awaited them.

"Hello!" remarked Arthur, "there are only four plates. Where's Fred's?"

Frank called the attention of the guide to this circumstance.

He spoke to the attendant monk.

The recluse produced a pad and pencil and wrote something in Spanish, which the guide translated to the boys.

"Your companion had his breakfast two hours ago."

"Two hours ago!" exclaimed Frank, in surprise.

"And went outside the convent."

"Oh, all right," answered Frank. "He's stuck on the scenery around here, I guess, and rose early to take a good look at it."

"Do you want to go out in the fields?" asked the guide, after breakfast.

The two boys said yes, so the guide led the way out into the little valley, where a dozen of the monks were working.

Their hoods were thrown back on their shoulders, so the boys got a view of their rugged, solemn faces.

After spending half an hour in the fields, Frank, Arthur and the guide returned to the convent, expecting to find Fred waiting for them.

There was no sign of him, however.

"I wonder where he went?" said Frank.

He asked the guide to make inquiries.

The man found a monk who had seen Fred take the path down the mountain about two hours before.

"Where does that lead to?" asked Frank.

"To the foot of these precipices," answered the guide. "No one goes down there—at least, not very far. He'll be back in a little while."

So the two boys hung around the monastery gate, waiting for Fred to return, but an hour passed and he was still absent.

"Some accident may have happened to him," said Frank, anxiously. "We ought to go down the path after him."

"I'll send Sancho down," said the guide.

Sancho was the man who looked after the supplies.

He was instructed and sent down the precipice pathway.

Dinner-time came and Sancho had not come back with information about Fred.

"I'm almost sure something has happened to him," Frank said to Arthur. "He wouldn't remain away in this fashion if he could help himself."

After the monks had had their dinner a place was made for the two boys and the guide and the meal was served to them.

Hardly had they finished their dinner before Sancho made his appearance.

He reported that he had not seen Fred, but had found a paper attached to a tree a thousand feet below.

It had writing on it, in pencil, which he could not understand, and he had brought it back with him.

To the boy's surprise, it proved to be a communication from Fred, as follows.

"Am following a strange clue that seems to point to the Silver City. If I don't return by noon, and you find this, follow me through tunnel below. FRED."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CLUE.

"We've simply got to follow him," said Frank, after reading the paper out aloud to Arthur. "It's more than an hour past noon now."

"I'd give something to know what kind of a clue he's found," replied his chum.

"The only way to find out is to go after him."

"That's what we'll do. Put it up to our guide."

Frank explained to the man that they had decided to follow their companion down the cliff.

The guide, however, objected strenuously.

He said it was a perilous undertaking to any one not accustomed to mountain climbing, and there was nothing to see that warranted the risk.

"But Mr. Leslie's son has gone down there, and he wrote on that paper that he wants us to follow him through a tunnel to some point he did not specify."

The guide shook his head, and said that he'd send Sancho on again, after he had had his dinner, with instructions to bring Fred Leslie back.

This did not satisfy the boys, excited as they were over Fred's intimation that he had found a clue to the buried city.

They insisted that all four should go on until they overtook their companion.

A good deal of argument on the subject ensued, but Frank was firm in his demand, and in the end the guide reluctantly yielded.

He insisted that the scheme was foolish, and that the risk must be on their own heads.

"All right," replied Frank. "The risk shall be ours. We don't propose to let Fred get into any trouble if we can help it."

Half an hour afterward, preceded by the guide and followed by Sancho, with a bundle of provisions on his back, Frank and Arthur started down the narrow pathway which wound around the giant cliffs.

They soon found, as the guide had warned them, that the journey was full of danger, particularly to persons inexperienced in such kind of traveling.

But the two boys possessed their full share of American pluck and endurance, and they were not going to be outshone by an English lad, who showed nerve enough to lead the way alone.

Their path was beset with small rocks and huge boulders, and often encumbered with shrub-like growths just coming into leaf.

The descent finally led down to a gully, where Sancho pointed out the tree on which the paper had been secured.

"There is a tunnel below here," said Frank. "Fred wrote that we should follow him into that."

The guide shrugged his shoulders, and they went on till they came out into a broad slope, which stretched steeply down into the heart of the range, narrowing as it went.

To descend further in a straight line without ropes and mountain pikes was practically out of the question, and the guide called their attention to that fact.

"That tunnel must be somewhere around here, then," said Frank, "for Fred never went down there."

The boys hunted among the bushes for it, while the men, who seemed to have no interest in this expedition, sat on a rock and conversed together in Spanish.

No doubt the reckless conduct of the boys was the subject of their remarks.

Frank suddenly came upon a smooth place on the rocks.

He gazed at it in surprise, for it was covered with strange hieroglyphics surrounding a pictured representation of the sun.

An arrow head pointed into a cleft into the rocks.

"Come here, Art," he called, excitedly. "I guess this is the clue Fred referred to in the paper."

Of course, neither Frank nor Arthur could make head or tail out of the inscription, but the meaning of the arrow-head seemed plain enough.

"Here's a paper stuck against the rock," said Arthur, eagerly grasping it.

It contained the following words in pencil:

"To Fred and Arthur. I am going to the Silver City. This tunnel leads to it, and then right to the monastery. Follow me. FRED."

you meet me on the way. The sun inscription on the face of the rock outside was certainly made by Peruvians of the Inca variety. It may have been cut out two or three hundred years ago, but to my eye its distinctness points to a much later origin. The arrow-head pointing into the cleft evidently is significant of something. I believe more than ever in the actual existence of an Inca town buried in the depths of this range. If we can find it, and then be able to return to civilization, it will make us famous.

"FRED."

"I wonder if we are really on the right track to Silver City," said Arthur, eagerly, as they entered the cleft and, striking a match, found that they were in a tunnel that led gently downward.

"Then you are beginning to think that the ancient mariner was not such a liar, after all?" laughed Frank.

"I am not willing to admit that he actually went to the buried city, as he asserted," replied his chum. "He could have picked up enough material in La Paz to manufacture a yarn out of. The fact that he probably sprung a fake story on us that morning does not disprove the theory that the buried city really does exist somewhere in this range."

"That's true; but, still, it's funny that nobody in this progressive age has seen fit to follow the legend up."

"I'll bet lots of people have tried it, but gave up on account of the many perils they had to face."

"Danger only incites the right kind of person to greater effort."

"Admitting that it does, not one person in a hundred venturing this way would have discovered those hieroglyphics and the arrow pointing into this tunnel. They would have turned back after seeing the impossibility of descending the slope except with the help of a long rope. Even if they were provided with every facility for getting down the gully, they would only be going the wrong way, if there is anything in the arrow-head."

"The arrow is plainly intended as a guide to some place," said Frank, "else it wouldn't be cut in this rock. Whether its meaning is of any use at this late day is quite another question."

"Well, let's get a move on," said Arthur, impatiently. "We ought to have torches to explore this tunnel."

"They would be a great advantage," admitted Frank; "for there's no telling what pitfalls might spring up in our path. But I'm afraid we'll have to get along without them."

Frank returned to the spot where the guide and Sancho sat in the sunshine.

The boy explained that he had found the tunnel, down which he was satisfied their companion had gone, and that he and Arthur were ready to proceed.

The guide and his companion followed Frank to the cleft in the rocks and looked in.

"You say he goes in here?" asked the man, with a doubtful expression on his face. "How you know that?"

"We found this paper here," said Frank. "Fred wrote it and left it here for us to find when we came this way."

It was evident enough that neither of the men cared to continue on through the tunnel.

If Fred Leslie had been foolish enough to venture in there, the guide reasoned that he stood a small chance of coming out again.

Frank pointed the arrow out to him, arguing that that was a good sign that the tunnel led to some definite end, but the guide was not convinced of the fact.

He advised the boys to give up further search for their companion and turn back to the monastery.

"Not on your life, we won't," replied the boy, sturdily. "We're going to find Fred first. We wouldn't shake him in that fashion. We're not built that way."

The guide didn't understand the English slang expressions used by Frank in his impetuous way, but he did understand that the boys were determined on entering the tunnel.

He turned to Sancho and they talked the matter over for a quarter of an hour before the latter reluctantly agreed to accompany the boys.

"We must have torches," said the guide.

"Where are we going to get such things?" asked Frank.

"We must make them," replied the man.

Four pine torches were put together by Sancho and soaked in a resinous gum produced by a tree growing on the mountain-side.

Lighting these, the party entered the tunnel.

CHAPTER X.

THE UNDERGROUND PASSAGE.

The tunnel had evidently once upon a time, probably ages ago, been an underground waterway.

In no other way could its existence be accounted for.

The guide walked in advance, swinging his torch aloft; the two boys followed at his heels, and Sancho brought up in the rear of the procession.

The tunnel maintained a uniform height of eight feet and a width of six as they advanced down the slope.

They could see nothing ahead of them at any time but intense blackness.

"We appear to be going down into the bowels of the earth," said Frank. "I don't see how Fred had the nerve to come all this way by himself in the dark."

"He's got good backbone, all right," said Arthur, in some admiration. "If I had been in his shoes I would have returned to the monastery to get the rest of the party to accompany me."

"If he had come back that would have been the end of the enterprise."

"Why would it?"

"Because Manuel, our guide, would never have consented to come down this way on a purely exploring expedition."

"Not if we had promised to pay him extra?"

"I don't think so. It is only because he knows Fred's father is a person of some considerable importance in England, and has been received in La Paz by all the chief functionaries, that he is reluctantly putting himself out to search for the boy. He is afraid to return to La Paz and report Fred lost in the mountains. He understands that a certain responsibility attaches to him as our conductor."

"Suppose that we don't find Fred at the end of this tunnel; what do you suppose Manuel will do?"

"I have no idea what he will do. He is a very uncertain proposition."

"If he refuses to go any further, what are we going to do about it?"

"I can't say what we will do until the time comes. I hope to find Fred waiting for us at the far outlet of this underground passage. He would be very foolish to venture into any situation that would make it a difficult matter for us to find him. It's mighty easy to lose oneself in these mountains."

"I'll bet it is. It seems to be plain sailing so far. Even without our guide we could easily find our way back to the monastery from this point."

"That's because we followed a straight path down the cliffs, and we can't very well go astray in this tunnel, so far as I have seen."

"I suppose that's the way Fred figured the matter; but I should think he'd have thought of his stomach. He ought to be hungry by this time, and there isn't any chance of his finding anything to relieve his hunger down here."

"He relies on us to fetch something along."

"That's all right; but it was reckless of him to depend on those papers he put up as guides to his progress and intentions. A wind might have come up and blown them away."

"It's my opinion he merely came down the precipice for the novelty of the thing, for he left no word of his intentions at the monastery. He clearly expected to return long before dinner-time; but when he ran across that inscription on the face of the rock, with its Inca representation of the sun, and saw the arrow-head pointing into the tunnel, his head, already filled with thoughts of the Silver City, got excited over the situation, and he recklessly started to explore this tunnel alone. I am satisfied he has pondered more over this buried city of the Andes than we ever have ourselves. I'll bet he has implicit faith in its existence."

"It would take an awful lot of faith to get me to come down here by my lonesomeness," replied Arthur.

"Fred is an enthusiastic chap. When he gets an idea in his head he follows it out to the limit."

"I call this tunnel the limit," said Arthur. "There doesn't seem to be any end to it. We must have walked a mile already."

"We've come some distance, that's a fact."

"Who knows but we may fetch up in China?" grinned Arthur.

"We must keep on until we reach the foot of the range."

"Down near sea-level, eh? That would give us a twelve-thousand-foot climb to get back to La Paz again—no fool of a job."

"Over two English miles."

The tunnel now swung around suddenly to the left and expanded into an immense rotunda, the roof of which was lost in the obscurity above.

Here they saw evidences that man had occupied the place for some purpose not apparent to their eyes.

The solid rock had been cut out in great pillars at one end of the room, if it might be called such, while in a central spot midway between the pillars stood an immense flat rock, which showed that it had been fashioned into its shape by rude implements of some kind.

Upon its widest side, facing the length and breadth of the room, was a clear representation of an immense sun, rays flashing away from it in every direction.

The stone had been cut away behind to make a platform, four feet lower, and this was reached by a series of wide steps.

Manuel, the guide, and his companion, Sancho, were clearly astonished at what they saw, and jabbered together in Spanish.

"Well, what do you think now, Art?" asked Frank. "Here is more evidence of Inca civilization. I shouldn't be surprised if we were somewhere on the outskirts of the buried city."

"It begins to look like it," replied Arthur. "It has the appearance of either a public gathering place or a temple of religious worship."

"That's what. I should think Fred would have halted here to await our appearance, but there is no sign of him. This is a long distance from the monastery."

"I should remark. I'm getting kind of peckish myself, and we had a good dinner before we started on this trip."

After seeing all they wanted to see, and becoming conscious that their torches would not last much longer, the guide was for retracing their steps and giving Fred up for lost.

But Frank would not stand for such a proposition.

To turn back would be to desert their companion, who had gone ahead with the utmost confidence that his friends would surely follow to rejoin him ultimately.

"We've gone too far to turn back now. We're only half a day's march from the monastery, anyway, and we've provisions enough to see us through for several days. I'm going to see this thing out. If you fellows don't want to proceed further, let us have the provisions and you can go back."

That was Frank's ultimatum to the guide, and Manuel was afraid to desert them, lest the consequences descend on his own head.

So they hunted around till they found the continuation of the tunnel, now much larger than before, and they continued on into the obscurity, the descent being now noticeably steeper.

The course of the tunnel was now tortuous, or corkscrew fashion.

For half an hour they kept on, until the last torch dropped to the ground, leaving them in total darkness; then, for fear of an unexpected pitfall, they began feeling their way along the wall.

Ten minutes more of this kind of traveling, and then the tunnel seemed to grow less dark.

"Our eyes are getting used to the gloom," said Frank.

"Or else we're drawing near an opening," replied Arthur.

The words were scarcely out of his mouth before they came to an abrupt turn in the tunnel, and they saw a glimmering of light a hundred yards ahead.

They hastened their steps, and, reaching that point where the tunnel turned again, they saw the opening and the light of day streaming into it.

"Hurrah!" shouted Arthur. "We have reached the end of this underground passage at last."

All made a simultaneous rush for the open air.

They now found themselves in the bight of a narrow valley literally covered with green foliage, while high above their heads rose the rocky sides of the mountain range, till its numerous peaks and crags seemed lost in the blue ether of the sky.

They sat down for a needed rest for they were now aware for the first time that they were fatigued by their long journey through the tunnel.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BURIED CITY.

"It's clear that we're a long way down the range," said Frank, glancing around the spot. "The air feels warm and dense. There's a great difference between this locality and La Paz."

"Well, I should say so," grinned Arthur.

"The important question which now presents itself is—where is Fred?"

"That's so. Where is he?"

As far as the four could see there was not the sign of a human being in that vicinity.

"He has led us a long and anxious chase," went on Frank, "and I think it is high time that he let up on us."

"I think so myself," replied Arthur. "If we leave the mouth of the tunnel we stand a good chance of missing him altogether."

"Oh, we can go a little way up this valley without missing him if he is here, for it's too narrow and open to pass any one unobserved," said Frank.

"We can't stay here long and expect to do anything, for it will soon be dark," answered Arthur. "I vote we eat and then move on."

This suggestion was acted on.

Sancho unstrapped his pack and distributed a certain quantity of provisions among the four, which they washed down with cool water from a wicker-covered bottle he had brought along.

Rested and refreshed, the party started on once again, with the boys in the lead.

After advancing perhaps a fifth of a mile the valley swung abruptly to the right, and then the party was treated to a genuine surprise.

Right before them stood a solid-looking one-storied building that had evidently once been white, but it was now stained and discolored by exposure to the weather of numberless years.

It possessed several narrow, unprotected openings that served as windows, and a wide doorway without a door.

The general color of the building was that of tarnished silver.

At right angles to it was another building, of similar size, but of odd design.

Diamond-shaped and square panels of a dark stone were set into the whiter rock at regular intervals down to a level with the top of the doorway, while the rest of the structure was put together with a burnished brick, which gave it a silvery effect in such places as had escaped the worst of the weather.

Both buildings were tenantless.

"The Silver City!" mechanically escaped the lips of both boys, as they stood and gazed almost open-mouthed at the two houses.

The guide and Sancho also uttered exclamations in Spanish.

Whether or not these buildings were a part of the legendary buried city was not yet certain, but the impression produced on the boys was that they were.

The silvery gloss was plain enough in spots to prove that when new they must have closely resembled that precious metal.

"We must be on the outskirts of the town proper," said Frank, in a voice quivering with excitement. "The next turn in the valley may take our breath away."

"Before we proceed further let us examine the inside of these buildings, the one nearest to us," said Arthur. "I am curious to learn how it looks."

"I'm with you," said Frank.

The two men were directed to remain on watch outside.

The boys entered the building and found themselves in a wide hall ornamented with tarnished columns that rose to the high ceiling.

The floor was of solid stone.

A doorway, with a peculiar shaped curved top, led into a large room, also ornamented with columns, and with a continuation of a similar stone floor.

A similar doorway, set at a right angle, pointed the way to still another room beyond.

The columns in the room they had entered were striped something after the fashion of a barber pole.

The curved top of the doorways were formed of blocks of pink and white stone arranged alternately, the pink ones being twice the width of the white.

The sides of the room to the height of about five feet were of white stone.

Then came a layer of pink, next a layer of light green, then a double layer of white, with a pink molding along the edge of the ceiling.

The ceiling itself was of white stone, with an opening in the center to admit the light and air.

"It took a lot of labor to put up this building," said Arthur, "and yet it does not appear to be furnished in any way. I wonder why such a fine structure was erected away from the city proper, if there is a city further on?"

"The city might have been originally intended to start here, and the people who were bossing the job changed their minds and chose another site," said Frank. "That's the only reason I can think of."

"Well, let's go on and see the rest of the house."

They were about to proceed when there suddenly came the sounds of running footsteps and an old white-haired man, dressed something like a Turk, with red slippers, loose white trousers, a red short jacket, and a round cap, came rushing through the arched doorway of the next room.

He stopped on seeing the boys, gazing upon them in a stupefied way.

From behind him rose a hubbub of sounds and a rush of footsteps.

Four men, one dressed all in red and the others all in white, bearing flaming torches, burst into sight.

The old man, who appeared to be fleeing from them, started forward, slipped and fell almost at Frank's feet.

Frank and Arthur, scenting danger, drew their seven-shooters.

The lights of the torches drew nearer each moment; then the natives ran through the arch.

Flinging up his arm hand and taking a firm grip on his pistol, the boy shouted: "Stop! I'll shoot the first man who advances!"

The oncoming bunch stopped and stared at the two boys.

It was amazement and not the sight of the weapons in the hands of the boys, the deadly nature of which the lads subsequently learned they were ignorant of, that brought them to a halt.

They jabbered among themselves in a strange language, and for the moment did not seem to know what to do.

The fellow in red, who appeared to be their leader, issued some kind of an order, and all rushed forward, grabbed the boys and the old man before they could act.

The boys put up a desperate struggle and shouted for help, hoping that the guide and Sancho outside would come to their aid.

What might have been the outcome of the affair it is hard to surmise but for the appearance of a dozen nearly naked men, of copper hue, who now came on the scene.

Each one of them held a rude spear, and the boys and the old man were surrounded and their capture made certain.

Outside another hubbub arose where Sancho and the guide were being overpowered by a score of the copper chaps, who had taken them by surprise.

The man in red and his three associates carried the old man back the way he and they had come, while the copper chaps forced the boys into the outer air.

A yell greeted the appearance of the lads.

With cries of triumph and exultation the four prisoners were hustled forward up the green embankment and around a jutting cliff, where the boys and their two companions caught their first view of the buried city of the Andes—the Silver City of the descendants of the ancient Incas of Peru.

Even in the gathering dusk the strange town presented an impressive effect.

It consisted of perhaps a hundred or more one-story houses, each erected in the center of a square plot of ground of emerald greenness, and each as like its neighbor as one pea to another.

All were built of some stone whose burnished whiteness would have dazzled the unaccustomed eye in the sunshine.

They were lined up with mathematical precision, with a walk composed of fine white sand from the single doorway to the broad, straight street.

These streets crossed one another like the squares of a checker-board.

Exactly in the center of the town was one building of unusual size and height, as compared with the others, and,

instead of a flat roof, was furnished with a great dome, which shone with a weird luster.

At regular intervals all around the four sides of this central building were enormous white columns capped with a ball of glistening metal, similar in luster to the dome itself.

Viewed from above and at a distance, the whole town looked like a collection of dazzlingly white model houses set down with great exactitude upon a brilliantly green carpet, with a wide border all around it of emerald-tinted foliage.

As the prisoners viewed it from a slight elevation, and close at hand, it presented a truly remarkable picture, and Frank and Arthur did not for a moment doubt that they were actually gazing on the Silver City of the ancient mariner's yarn.

But the circumstances surrounding their introduction to it were not of a nature to make them feel particularly happy.

There was a sinister purport in the hostile attitude of the natives that caused a chill of apprehension as to their future to course up and down their spines.

They were prisoners of a strange people, whose habits and customs were probably totally at variance with the rest of the world.

A people to whom civilized usages were doubtless unknown, as they themselves were unknown to civilization.

In the very heart of the Andes, they could, if threatened with death, look for no help from the outside.

In their present situation they were practically dead to the world.

After taking in the wonderful picture as a whole, the boys turned their attention toward the one prominent edifice, in the center of the town, toward which it appeared they were being hurried by the triumphant squad of natives who surrounded them and cut off all hope of escape, if any such thing was in their minds.

That this was a place of worship seemed reasonable to suppose from the number of white-robed people who at that moment were either entering it through its wide-open portals between columns of shimmering metal, or wending their way toward it along every street, and also because of a white smoke which rose through an opening in the roof, as if from an altar fire.

To further confirm such a belief, the faint sound of sweet music arose in the air from the interior of the building, mingled with the sonorous chanting of many voices.

CHAPTER XII.

WORSHIP OF THE SETTING SUN.

When the crowd of natives with their prisoners reached the foot of the main street, which led directly up to the portals of the central building, they came to a pause, and their cries ceased like magic.

It seemed as though an invisible wall held them back at the very portals of the Silver City.

All but the men who held the arms of the prisoners, and stood immovable like so many graven images, prostrated themselves in the shrubbery in attitudes of reverence.

The two boys stood almost together on the very edge of the creamy white pavement and watched the white-robed inhabitants of the Silver City walking singly and in groups up the wide steps of the dome-crowned edifice.

They seemed to be a higher order of people from the dark-skinned, athletic and lightly-clad men who had captured the visitors to the valley.

But the boys were not near enough to form any idea of their personality.

There seemed to be no doubt, however, that the prisoners would shortly be brought face to face with those who were in authority over the buried city.

At last every white-robed man and woman had entered the building, which the boys afterward learned was the Temple of the Sun, and a stillness like that of death fell upon the valley for several minutes.

Then, as if from a preconcerted signal, a paean of praise rose from the throat of every person within the temple.

While the glow of the setting sun lingered upon the snow-clad peak of far-away Illimani the chant continued.

As it died away into a purple tint the weird song subsided in intensity.

At length the light faded entirely away from the glacier, and then silence fell once more upon the temple and valley alike.

A dense white vapor ascended heavenward through open-

ings in the dome, and the still evening air became loaded with a sweet-smelling incense.

Once more rose the street chorus of young girls mingled with the chant of the priests.

As the cadence rose and fell, like the swelling and receding notes of some great organ in a vast church, the boys seemed to forget their unusual and ticklish surroundings in the wonderful impressiveness of the invisible service they were listening to.

One girlish soprano voice soared above all the others, of unparalleled sweetness and power, every note as clear as a silver bell, and as Frank listened to it his emotional nature was stirred to its very depths, while his eyes grew humid and moist.

That voice maintained its supremacy to the last, dropping in exact proportion as the chorus and chant dropped, and its last liquid note trembled on the air and vibrated through the valley on the wings of the silence which succeeded.

Then the white-robed people issued in a stream from the temple, but instead of dispersing they gathered in a mass in the immediate vicinity of the building.

A score, perhaps, of white-clad girls next came out, but instead of descending the steps, as the others had done, they spread themselves out along the portico.

A white-haired man made his appearance with a measured stride.

An immense ruby, surrounded by a glittering array of almost priceless diamonds, flashed from the center of the diadem which encircled his venerable brow.

His bare arms were ornamented with a pair of massive circlets of solid beaten gold.

Similar bands, but not so heavy, surrounded his wrists, and these were thickly studded with jewels.

Over a white attire similar to that worn by the other people was a sort of vestment on which was emblazoned in brilliant tints the figure of the sun, with rays projecting from it in every direction.

This figure, astonishing as it may seem, was fashioned entirely of topaz and rubies, and was a wonderful piece of handiwork.

Following on the heels of the old man came six men of varying ages, all dressed exactly like the priest, but in much less impressive way, and in a descending scale to correspond with their rank.

The rank and file of the inhabitants bowed their heads in token of respect for these exalted personages as they passed out of the temple and finally paused on the lowest step.

The prisoners and their native conductors could barely see this ceremony from where they stood, owing to the gathering darkness and the distance which intervened.

At some signal from the high priest a score of boys sprang out of the temple with flashing torches and took their places in certain elevated positions, the glare of their lights throwing a weird radiance upon the scene.

A second signal came from the priest, and a dozen strong-limbed young men came forward and bowed one knee before him.

The priest issued some command to them.

Instantly they arose, turned around and marched in a body rapidly down the main street toward the spot where the natives and their prisoners were drawn up in silent array.

They halted on the inner edge of the pavement while one of their number, a handsome lad of perhaps eighteen, whose brow was encircled with a narrow golden band without ornament, while his companions wore silver ones, advanced and addressed the natives in a tone strange to the prisoners' ears, but musical and pleasing.

A stalwart native advanced a foot and replied in a language somewhat similar, though harsher in tone.

While talking he pointed to the prisoners, and seemed to be giving an account of how they had appeared in the valley.

When he had concluded and fallen back among his fellows, the young man advanced and looked closely at each of the prisoners.

His gaze rested longest on the handsome, manly countenance of Frank Dudley, who met his look unflinchingly, like the father and he was.

The young man finally tapped Frank on the breast and motioned to him to come forward.

His attitude seemed almost friendly, and the boy obeyed.

Then he tapped Arthur, Manuel, the guide, and, last of all, the sullen-faced Sancho, and ordered them in pantomime

to fall in behind Frank in single file, which they did, Manuel and Sancho most unwillingly.

At a signal the other young men closed in around them, and then the party started up the white paved street toward the portal of the temple, where the high priest stood, with his assistants around him in a semi-circle, the girls on the steps behind, with one of their number, a young virgin of surpassing loveliness, whose jeweled diadem flashed in the light of the torches, a step in advance.

As the prisoners came within the glow cast by the torches they had a good view of the congregated inhabitants of the Silver City.

In color they were many degrees lighter than the native population of the valley, who appeared to be slaves or serfs of the better class.

Their attire was composed of spotless white robes, without sleeves, gathered at the waist by a stiff cloth girdle of the same color.

The only difference between the male and female dress was that the latter was longer, reaching quite to the ankles, and more voluminous in its folds, while it was much lower in the neck.

The men wore plain silver armlets and wristbands; the women jeweled ones.

Each wore a silver band around the forehead, without ornamentation.

This was the costume of the majority.

There were others whose headbands, armlets and bracelets were ornamented with precious stones in keeping with their rank in the community.

This select body stood on the right hand of the high priest and his assistants.

The prisoners were lined up before the high priest for inspection, as it were.

He looked at each critically, his gaze dwelling longer on Frank and Arthur than on Manuel and Sancho.

Finally he addressed himself to Dudley in a rich and musical tone.

Frank understood not a word he said.

Nevertheless, he replied in good English, though convinced that his words would be equally unintelligible to the priest.

The religious head of the Silver City listened attentively, and then motioned Frank aside, speaking some words to the handsome young man, who at once placed himself beside his prisoner.

The high priest then spoke to Arthur, and, having listened to his reply, assigned another of the young men to take charge of him.

Manuel, the guide, now came in for his share of attention.

His reply was in Spanish, and a frown gathered upon the face of the priest.

When Sancho also answered in Spanish, the frown became darker.

The high priest issued some orders to the other young men.

They formed close about the guide and his associate and marched them off down the street to where the natives were still waiting.

Manuel and Sancho were turned over to them, and the whole crowd set off with their two prisoners, shrieking, and talking, and gesticulating violently.

The high priest now made a signal, and the inhabitants began to melt away in groups to their several homes.

The girls, with the single exception of the beautiful one in advance, disappeared into the temple.

The high priest, followed by his assistants, moved in solemn procession up to one of the sections of the building.

There the six priests parted from the high priest, who entered the edifice, and returning in a body, entered the other side sections of the temple building.

All the torch-bearers but one vanished; he accompanied the beautiful girl down to where Frank and Arthur stood beside the two young men.

Her glance rested a moment on Frank's face, and the boy thought her the loveliest girl he had ever seen in his life.

That was also Arthur's opinion.

Preceded by the torch-bearer, she walked to the house on the eastern side of the temple and entered it.

The handsome young man indicated to Frank in friendly pantomime that he was to accompany him.

He led the way to the same house, and soon Dudley stood within the portals of one of the dwellings of the Silver City, while at the same moment Arthur Hale was introduced by the other young man to one of the dwellings close by.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TEMPLE AND TREASURE.

Frank soon had evidence that he was not to be treated like a prisoner, and he felt exceedingly gratified and relieved.

He found himself in a large, square room, furnished with stone seats and lounges, equipped with soft stuffed coverings.

It was the main or reception room of the house.

Doors covered with a white flowing drapery led to other rooms beyond.

The roof was open to the air, being divided in four sections by stone cross-pieces supported by a central column that was highly polished till it shone like burnished silver.

A circular stone table surrounded this column, and here the meals of the household were served twice a day.

Frank subsequently discovered that the general furnishings of the house were on a much more comfortable scale than he had had any idea of at first.

The handsome young man, whose name he subsequently discovered was Rollo, tried to impress the fact upon him in pantomime that he was to make himself at home.

Frank appeared to grasp his meaning, and smile gratefully.

By the young man's orders a meal was specially prepared for him by a native girl, for the family dinner was over two hours before.

It was served on silver plates, and, whatever it was composed of, it proved quite palatable to the boy.

When he had finished, and the dishes had been taken away, the beautiful young girl, whom Frank subsequently found out was the young man's sister, appeared with an odd kind of stringed instrument, and she sang and played in a manner so ravishing as to quite astonish our young hero.

He recognized her voice as the soprano which had led in the service in the temple at sunset, though on this occasion she sang so low that the sound did not penetrate to any great distance.

Both brother and sister acted in an exceedingly friendly manner toward their visitor, though of course all their communication with him had to be carried on in pantomime.

At nine o'clock Frank was shown to an inner room, also open to the sky, where he found a comfortable lounge, on which he rested through the night.

Next morning he breakfasted with the brother and sister, and thereby understood that their parents were probably dead, and they the sole occupants of the house.

After the meal he sat for an hour with the girl, whose name was Alma, each trying to make themselves understood by the other.

They met with poor success, but the girl seemed to take great delight out of the tete-a-tete, laughing musically at their blunders, and at the same time casting many an admiring glance at the handsome young American.

By and by Rollo reappeared and motioned Frank to follow him.

When the boy took up his hat, Alma took it from him and examined it closely, with exclamations of surprise.

She put it on her own shapely head and looked at her brother roguishly, whereat Rollo smiled in a pleased way, but shook his head as if he did not particularly approve of the effect it produced in her.

She then placed it on her brother's head and danced gleefully around him.

All this proved very amusing to Frank, who was obliged to admit that the hat was not an improvement to the attire of the Silver City people.

Alma then removed her brother's headband and placed it on Frank's head, noting the effect with critical earnestness.

Evidently she greatly preferred it to the American hat.

After that Rollo and his guest left the house and came out on the broad, white street.

The sun was already several hours high, but it would not shine down into the valley until nearly noon, and then but for a short time, so hidden was the Silver City in the depths of the range.

The morning services, which took place exactly at sunrise, were gone through while Frank lay asleep, consequently he had no knowledge of the fact.

The inhabitants of the Silver City were either strolling through their white thoroughfares or seated in their reception rooms, entertaining one another or friends who dropped in to visit them.

Rollo led Frank to the Temple of the Sun, his own and the

Arthur was

"Well, old man, how did you get on since we were obliged to separate last night?" inquired Art.

"First class," replied Frank, thinking of the lovely girl who had laid herself out to make things cheerful for him.

"Glad to hear it," replied Arthur. "The people of the Silver City do not seem to be such bad persons as we feared they were at first."

"I should say they're not," answered Frank, emphatically.

"The question that interests me very much is, what do they really mean to do with us? So far they've treated me as if I was a nob. Is this thing going to be kept up? And will they allow us to leave the valley when we express an intention to do so? You know what that ancient mariner said—though I still maintain that he was a great liar—that he was the only white man who ever saw the hidden city of the Andes and lived to tell the tale. I think he said that the people treated him in fine shape, but that their ultimate intentions toward him were of a sinister nature—they proposed, if I remember rightly, to serve him up at a certain time as a sacrifice to their gods. I hope we're not in for anything like that, chum. It would be altogether too rough on us."

"I don't think there is any danger of that thing happening," reassured Frank. "These people seem very far from being blood-thirsty, either in their religion or otherwise."

"It is to be hoped you are right. But how about Fred? Is he a prisoner here, too?"

"I couldn't tell you," replied Frank. "I don't see how we're going to find out, as we can't converse with those people, or make ourselves understood except by signs, which is a universal, but not altogether satisfactory, language."

"It worked pretty well between me and that chap who seems to have charge of me," said Arthur. "We got along famously."

"Then if you're such an expert pantomimist, go and try your luck on him with reference to Fred."

Arthur seemed doubtful about the experiment, but he was willing to try, as he was eager to hear some tidings about their English friend.

The young man's name was Alazan, though of course the boys had no way of knowing that.

Alazan and Rollo were conversing together when Arthur interrupted them with his pantomimic efforts.

They both watched his motions attentively.

Art began by holding up one finger and then pointing at Frank; a second finger, and then pointing to himself; a third finger, and pointing in the direction of the mountain tunnel.

After that he looked inquiringly at Alazan.

"I'm afraid it won't work," said Frank, as he saw the perplexed expression on the young man's face.

Alazan said something to Rollo, and Rollo answered; but it was clear they had not grasped the idea Arthur was trying to convey.

Finally Alazan shook his head.

"That settles it, Art. Your pantomime is too rocky for any one to translate."

Arthur made another attempt, with variations, but with no better success.

"I give it up," he said.

In a few minutes both Rollo and Alazan started for the street, motioning the boys to follow.

Their object was soon apparent.

They intended to show Frank and Arthur all that was to be seen of the Silver City.

They took them up one street and down another, and finally led them back to the Temple of the Sun.

They were permitted a peep into the dome-room, where the religious services were held twice a day—at the rising and the setting of the sun.

The room was truly a magnificent one.

The walls were thickly studded with gold and silver plates, and protuberant ornaments of the same metals; and exquisite imitations of human and other figures, and also of plants, fashioned with perfect accuracy in gold and silver, were to be seen at regular intervals.

Hidden among the metallic foliage, or creeping among the roots, were many brilliantly colored birds, serpents, lizards, etc., made chiefly of precious stones.

On the western wall, and opposite the eastern portal, was a splendid representation of the sun, the god of the Incas.

It consisted of a human face in gold, with innumerable golden rays branching from it; and when the beams of the sun fell upon the golden disc, as it did for a short time almost every day, they were reflected from it as from a mirror, and again reflected through the whole temple by the numberless plates, cornices, bands, and images of gold, until the temple

seemed to glow with a sunshine more intense than that of nature.

It was under these conditions that Frank and Arthur saw the temple, and the impression it left on their minds was never wiped out.

After leaving the temple, the young men took the boys to the treasure room, and here their eyes were fairly dazzled with the display of jewels and lumps of beaten gold and silver with which the room was fairly crowded.

There were several men at work here fashioning bead bands, bracelets, and a score of other articles out of the precious metals, and incrusting some of them with precious stones.

This room had no opening on the outer air, but its entrance through the interior of the temple building was just as open and unguarded as the doorway of any house in the Silver City.

Evidently such a crime as stealing was not known in the place.

"Well, I'd be satisfied to consider my fortune made if I owned half that is here," returned Arthur, almost enviously.

"Don't worry; you're not likely to own it," laughed Frank; and with these words he and Art, followed by their conductors, left the treasure room of the temple.

CHAPTER XIV.

PLANNING TO ESCAPE.

"What are we going to do about Fred?" asked Arthur, when they got outside of the temple. "We can't stay here when there's a possibility that he's lost in the range somewhere. It's our duty to hunt him up."

"That's right," responded Frank, "if these people will let us go. I don't like the way they treated Manuel and Sancho last night. It seemed to me that that high priest who runs things here turned them over to the Indians, and from the racket those chaps made I don't believe they meant any good to our guide and his companion. It seems to me that, in spite of the fine way they are treating us, we are actually prisoners."

The boys talked the matter over on the way back to Rollo's house, and finally agreed to try and make their young hosts understand that they wanted to return by the way they came.

Frank made the first move by giving Rollo to understand by pantomime that he wanted his friends to remain with him.

This worked satisfactorily up to the general dinner hour in Silver City, which seemed to be about half-past four.

At that hour Alazan called for Arthur, and he had to accompany him to his home.

Frank, Rollo and Alma ate dinner together.

After the meal Rollo went out, leaving his sister to entertain Frank.

Frank and Arthur were both left entirely to themselves while all the inhabitants were at worship, and they took advantage of the fact to come together at the entrance to the Rollo home.

"The best thing we can do," said Frank, "will be to get up early to-morrow, and, while the people are all at the temple for morning worship, and nobody on the watch, make a break for the tunnel and get a hustle on for the monastery of the Black Brotherhood."

This proposal suited Arthur, and the matter was so decided.

Both boys awoke just before sunrise, but kept to their rooms until the coast was clear, and then they came together on the street and started for the end of the valley.

Everything went well with them until they reached the mouth of the tunnel, which they located without much difficulty.

They were already congratulating themselves on their good luck when their way was suddenly barred by two stalwart natives, who had been lying in the grass near the tunnel, apparently on guard.

The natives pounced on them, though without violence, and marched them back to the portals of the Silver City, where they motioned them to return toward the temple.

The boys obeyed, much crestfallen and disappointed.

"What chumps we are," cried Arthur, angrily. "We might have shot those two chaps and have made our escape."

Frank's disappointment was so apparent that Alma looked sad.

Every day for more than a week Frank repeated his desire to leave the Silver City with his companions, but met with the same negative reply.

"It was the 1st of August when we came into this valley,"

said Frank one morning, "and we've been here now ten days."

"And likely to stay ten weeks, or months, or even years," growled Art in a discontented tone. "We were fools ever to think of penetrating down into the depths of the Andes in our crazy search for a lost treasure. You remember the priest at the convent at La Paz told us that many persons went in search of this place and not one, other than the two monks one hundred and sixteen years ago, ever returned to relate their adventures; and the monks in question did not find the Silver City, but merely some of the ornaments of the inhabitants, which are now in the convent museum."

"That's right," nodded Frank. "If any of those searchers actually reached this city, as we have done, they were either detained indefinitely or put out of the way altogether."

"We haven't seen a thing of Manuel or Sancho since they were separated from us the night we were captured. They were turned over to the Indians, who are a fierce-looking lot, and pretty low in the human scale, I should judge. I wouldn't be surprised to learn that the rascals had done them up. It's funny how the people of the city, who appear to be entirely unarmed, can keep such a wild lot in subjection. They don't dare pass the city limits, in spite of the fact that they possess ugly looking spears and are uncommonly strong. They seem to do all the work for the Silver City people. The men till the fields and carry burdens, while each family in the town has one of their young women to do the cooking and housework."

"It must be religious fear that holds them down. They've no doubt always been slaves, and they can't get away from that fact."

"Mr. Leslie has of course got back to La Paz before this, and I am sure he will use extraordinary efforts to find his son, as well as us, for whose safety he must consider himself responsible. Of course, if Fred did not find his way back to the monastery of the Black Brotherhood within a short time, there is little doubt but he lost himself in these mountains and has long before this perished of starvation."

"As the exit by the tunnel seems to be constantly guarded, we must try to get out of this forsaken spot some other way," said Frank. "We must watch our chance, provide ourselves with food to carry, and then seek some other outlet up the range."

"That's a pretty desperate risk," replied Art; "but I'm ready to attempt it when you say the word, for I don't care to stay here indefinitely."

"The chief risk is that we'll be lost in the fastness of the Andes the moment we leave the valley," replied Frank.

"We'll always have Mount Illimani for a guide. We know that La Paz is only twenty-five miles to the west of it. All we'll have to do is to make for the La Paz Valley and—"

"It's easy to talk, Art; but to make our way two miles or more up these mountains, by the roundabout way we'll have to take, will be enough to try our nerves and endurance to the utmost. Still I don't see that there is any other way left for us to escape. Whether we survive the ordeal will be as much a question of luck as anything else."

"I'll take the chance any time rather than stay here. I have had all I want of the Silver City."

And there the matter rested for the time being.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DAWN OF LOVE.

On the following day the boys, while walking about the suburbs of the Silver City, noticed a commotion up the valley.

Their hearts suddenly beat quickly, at the thought that this might be a rescue party in search of them.

Their hopes dropped when they made out a party of Indians advancing with shouts towards the city.

It looked as if more intruders into the hidden valley had been caught in the act, just as they had been.

"Some more unfortunates, I suppose," remarked Frank. "Can it be possible that this is Mr. Leslie and his searchers?"

It appeared, however, that there was only one prisoner this time, and the boys were not kept long in suspense as to his identity.

To the lads' surprise, and we might almost say delight, they recognized Fred Leslie.

Not that they were glad to find him a prisoner, but on the principle that misery loves company, but because of the great relief they felt to know at last that their English friend had not perished of hunger and thirst in the mountains.

Still he looked something of a wreck, as if he and Fred had lately been on close terms.

It was the hour of the service of the setting sun, and the three boys were sitting by themselves in their usual meeting spot, the doorway of the Rollo house.

The sun had set, the incense had floated out on the evening air, and the chanting of the priests, mingled with Alma's wonderful soprano, had died away into silence.

The boys were looking to see the people of the Silver City pour out of the temple, as was their custom at the close of the service.

Instead of that, one young man appeared, coming down the stone steps alone.

It was Rollo, and he came directly over to his home.

"Come," he said, marching up to the surprised Dudley, and putting his arm around his neck. "You must go with me to the temple."

Frank understood him and rose to his feet, but he was nevertheless astonished, for he had learned that no one but a believer in the Inca faith was permitted in the temple when the priests and people were gathered there.

Nevertheless, he could only obey Rollo's request, which was practically an order.

"What's up now?" asked Arthur, uneasily, as he and Fred watched their companion depart with Rollo and then ascend the steps into the temple. "I don't like the looks of it for a copper cent."

"It's a mystery to me," answered Fred. "I hope they don't mean him any harm."

Arthur insisted that it had a sinister look.

"Something out of the ordinary is going to happen," he said. "The people haven't come out as usual. There's some new ceremony about to take place in the temple. And Frank is going to have a part in it. I don't like to say what I think."

And while they talked in a way that showed their uneasiness, the chanting of the priests and the chorus of the young girls was resumed, but the soprano voice of Alma was missing.

Then once more came a solemn silence that filled Fred and Arthur with fresh anxiety.

It was succeeded with a burst of song from the entire congregation of the temple, which continued several minutes.

Then came a cloud of incense floating through the holes in the silver dome, and the chorus of the girls and chanting of the priests were renewed.

When this had died away the people came flocking out, but instead of dispersing as usual they formed in two lines from the temple to the edge of the Rollo property.

"Gee whiz!" cried Art, in astonishment, "what's this, any way?"

Out from the temple came the bevy of chorus girls singing a simple air, and throwing flowers and sprays of green leaves in front of them as they walked down the lane formed by the people.

Immediately behind them followed Frank Dudley and Alma hand in hand, the girl decked in flowers from head to foot, through which her jeweled diadem and ornaments flashed in the light of numberless torches.

"Suffering sixpence!" gasped Arthur, to the amazed Fred. "It looks like a wedding show."

Behind Frank and Alma walked Rollo, and behind him his six personal friends.

As the short procession passed along the people shouted and waved their arms, and seemed to be delighted beyond measure.

Then as the Rollo home was reached the procession paused, and Alazan and his friend, who had charge of Arthur and Fred, came forward and beckoned the two boys to come along.

They did so and were accorded a position on either side of Rollo himself.

The procession then moved on again.

It passed three times around the temple, the high priest and his assistants standing on the steps to view it, and then it marched to a big gathering hall in the southern wing of the building.

Here were tables spread with fruit and nuts, and silver plates of a flavor resembling a rich cordial.

All the inhabitants of the Silver City crowded in after the principal participants of the show, and for an hour there was a banquet of high jinks, with Frank and Alma as the head and heart of it all.

"Say," said Art to Fred, "do you think Frank has been married to that girl?"

"Why, I don't know," replied Fred.

"He never gives us a hint about such a thing coming off."

"I don't believe he knew anything about it himself till that chap, Rollo, came and walked him off to the temple."

"That's rather a sudden way of ringing it on a fellow, don't you think?"

"Rather; but probably that's the way they do things in this town."

At the close of the feast the high priest appeared, clothed in his ordinary attire, without the glittering vestment he wore during the religious services.

He made a short speech to the bride and groom of this singular wedding, and then presented Alma with a magnificent necklace of alternate diamonds and rubies, the pendant being a solid gold ornament in which stood an uncommonly fine solitaire.

To Dudley he presented a pair of heavy gold bracelets and a gold ring with a large and particularly fine ruby.

It was the custom of the Incas that the bride and groom, with such friends as they selected, should spend the marriage night in the sacred cave of the Sun.

Accordingly, when the high priest withdrew, Alma selected her brother; and she succeeded in making Frank understand that he could choose his two friends, which he did.

Surrounded by torch bearers, they made their way to the cave in the great mountain to the east of the city.

Here the five were left for the night.

The cave was partly natural and partly hewn out of solid rock.

An immense figure of the sun was cut on one of the walls.

There was nothing else in the place but a long stone seat directly under the image of the sun, and on this the five seated themselves, Rollo next to his sister while Arthur and Fred sat alongside of Frank.

"Are we to stay here all night in this fashion?" asked Arthur, thing how uncomfortable it was going to be.

Frank spoke to Alma in her native tongue, though he was not very successful at it as yet, and she gave him to understand that all were to remain there until the sun rose, and Frank passed the information on to his friends.

"So you're really married to Rollo's sister, are you?" asked Arthur.

"According to the Inca custom, I am," he answered.

"You've caught a dandy wife all right; but how is this going to effect your escape from the valley? We are almost ready to light out."

"I mean to take Alma with me."

"But will she go? Will she leave her brother and—"

He never completed the sentence, for just then, without the least warning, the ground began to rock and heave in the throes of a great earthquake, alongside of which all the others the boy had felt since they came to South America were like mere flea bites.

CHAPTER XVII.

CONCLUSION.

Consternation ensued among the five young people in the cave.

They would have rushed forth into the air, but in the glare of the falling torches they saw the whole front of the cavern fall in with a fearful crash.

Alma uttered a thrilling scream and threw her arms around her young husband.

Then she hung limp and insensible in his arms.

A second and then a third upheaval followed the first, until in their terror it seemed as if the mountains were falling in about their heads.

A fourth and last shock dislodged a good bit of the debris from the mouth of the cave, but those inside did not know it.

They crouched about in total darkness, expecting nothing short of a terrible death.

The movement of the earth finally subsided, and absolute stillness reigned once more over the face of nature.

How they passed that long and fearsome night the boys never knew.

It was as if they had been stunned by the awful concussions and thunderous noises which they had left and heard during the intervals of that quarter of an hour while the earthquake lasted.

Alma recovered her senses after a time and lay trembling and unnerved in Frank's arms.

At last morning dawned, and then the occupants of the sacred sun-cave saw that they were not buried alive as they had feared they were.

The cavern was badly shattered, the front of it being com-

pletely demolished, but there was a large opening through which they were able to make their way into the open air.

Then an astonishing sight met their startled vision—a sight that brought cries of acute despair to the lips of Rollo and his sister as they stood gazing across the valley.

Where was the Silver City on the night before?

Gone from sight.

Vanished as the dew before the morning sun.

It was buried under heaps of rocky debris.

And with it had disappeared every man, woman and child who dwelt within it at the moment the earthquake swooped down on the devoted valley.

As soon as Frank recovered from his astonishment he devoted his efforts to comforting Alma and her brother, but it was some time before their spirits became at all composed.

Alma clung to her young husband in a truly pathetic manner, while Rollo looked on the site of the now truly buried city like one in a dream, his head bowed under the grief of the awful trial.

As Alma wouldn't let Frank from her side, Fred and Arthur went forth together to ascertain how things stood in the valley with reference to their escape from the place.

They were gone for more than a hour, and when they returned they brought what they considered remarkable news.

First, they had discovered the storehouse of the Silver City in the hills, filled with dried cereals and fruits.

Second, the earthquake had opened up to view a swiftly flowing underground river, which they believed led to the Pacific Ocean.

Third, caught in a bight of the bank, they had discovered a flat-bottomed boat, in good condition and laden with empty petroleum cans, that must at some time have come down from the lower part of the La Paz valley.

Fourth, they had found that a great crevasse had opened in the valley, cutting off all approach to the mouth of the long mountain tunnel.

The only feasible way of escape that they could see lay in trusting themselves to the boat and floating in it down to its outlet.

And this proposition they laid before Frank with the expectation that it would meet with his approval.

The two boys had each brought with them an armful of dried fruit and cakes, prepared by the Indians, of powdered meal which had been mixed with water and baked.

When the boys had satisfied their appetites the party set out for the spot where the boat was lying in the indentation of the underground bank.

While Frank was examining her, Rollo and Alma sat together with arms entwined, entirely oblivious of what was going on.

The cans were removed from the boat, and a number of them washed out and dried with grass to make them suitable to hold a quantity of provisions to support the little party for a week or two.

By noon everything was in readiness for them to embark on the underground river.

Long before this Rollo and his sister had picked their way over the broken ground to the ruins of the Silver City and could be seen sitting on the stones of that portion of the temple building which alone appeared above the surface of the ground.

Frank went out to let them know that the time was come when they must leave the valley and their dead race forever.

Before speaking to them Dudley walked slowly about the ruins of the temple.

The sun was now shining down into the hidden valley, and its rays, shooting into the solitary section of the former magnificent building that was not wholly buried from sight, were reflected back from a thousand brilliant objects.

For a moment or two Frank was puzzled to account for this strange circumstance until he discovered to his astonishment that he was gazing down into the treasure-room of the buried city.

Instantly it occurred to his mind that it would be foolish of them not to secure for their subsequent benefit as much of this wealth as it was possible for them to carry away with safety in the flatboat.

He signaled to Arthur and Fred to come out there.

The two boys did, and were equally astonished at the sight Frank pointed out to them.

Preparations were immediately made to secure the treasure.

It took the rest of the day to clear out the balance of the cans and fill them partly full of gems and blocks of pure gold and a small quantity of silver.

The treasure was carefully packed and covered with thick grass, the jewels alone filling several cans.

All were distributed about the boat so as to maintain a proper balance.

It was just sundown when they finished their last meal in the valley and were ready to go.

By this time Alma and Rollo were resigned to their great loss.

The last rays of the sun lay upon the snow-capped tip of Mount Illimani, and toward that point Rollo and Alma faced. They both began to sing a mournful requiem to the departed souls of their people.

It was a sad and weird melody, and as the three boys listened to it in respectful silence the tears came into their eyes.

Especially was this the case with Frank.

Alma's clear soprano voice rose palpitatingly on the air, as it did the first night he had listened to it while he and Arthur stood in the midst of their Indian captors on the edge of the Silver City.

But it was a different strain now—a strain the boys could never afterward forget.

At last it ceased, and the hidden valley of the Andes had heard it for the last time.

Brother and sister stood a while in prayer; then Alma, leaving Rollo's side, walked up to Frank and placed her hands in his confidently, as much as to say: Henceforth your people are my people; to your care my brother and I confide ourselves.

Five days later the flatboat shot out into a wide valley backed by the foothills of the Andes and faced by the Pacific Ocean.

Here they found plenty evidences of civilization, and, hauling in at a village, they succeeded in finding a man who could speak English fairly well.

From him Frank ascertained that the Peruvian port of Mollendo, where they had disembarked for their trip to La Paz five months before—for the date was now December 18—was only fifty miles to the north.

Arrangements were made to have the flatboat towed to that port, and four days later they entered the harbor of Mollendo.

While Fred and Arthur remained to guard the treasure on the flatboat, Frank escorted Rollo and Alma to the best hotel in town.

Their singular dress, as well as their personal beauty, attracted great attention along the streets and at the hotel.

Frank as soon as possible called on the mayor and gave a rough outline of the adventures he and his two friends had been through since leaving La Paz to inspect the convent of the Black Brotherhood in the Andes.

The boy learned that their mysterious disappearance had been published throughout southern Peru and the State of Bolivia, and that the government of the latter State had been searching for them for months without success.

Mr. Leslie was at La Paz, hoping, almost against hope.

A dispatch was at once sent to him that the boys had turned up safe and sound at Mollendo, and he hastened to that town as fast as traveling facilities could carry him.

Telegraph messages were also forwarded to Frank Dudley's father, at Colon, on the Isthmus, and to Arthur Hale's parents, in New York.

Before leaving Mollendo for Panama, Alma and her brother were persuaded to assume the regulation costume of civilized communities, and to lay aside their splendid headbands and other articles of adornment not in keeping with modern style.

A portion of the treasure was disposed of in Mollendo, the amount realized being over \$100,000, and the balance was boxed and conveyed to San Francisco, en route to New York, where the bulk of it was sold, and something over a million in money received in exchange, which was equally divided among the boys and the last two survivors of the Inca race.

Frank and Alma were regularly married at his father's Irvington home, and with Rollo for their constant companion, took up their residence there.

Fred Leslie subsequently returned to England with his father, and during the summer of that year Frank and Alma, accompanied by Arthur and Rollo, visited them at their Surrey estate.

It was a happy reunion for the young people, who frequently recalled their adventure in South America when Seeking a Lost Treasure.

Next week's issue will contain "MATT, THE MECHANIC; OR, THE BOY WHO MADE HIS PILE."

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CURRENT NEWS

The ominous buzz of a rattler nearly broke up the meeting in a Baptist revival at Keys chapel, near Belton, Tex. The snake was coiled near two small children lying on the ground under the arbor in which the meeting was being held. A man was quick to obey the Biblical injunction by smashing the snake's head. It had nine rattles.

An old shot bag, containing more than \$1,000 in small notes and silver was found in a closet at the home of Mrs. Elizabeth Fildes, seventy-three. The money represents the life savings. She fell from a ladder while painting the exterior of her home and sustained a broken leg. She was removed to the home of her son-in-law, John Kennard, with whom she will now live permanently. "John, be careful of an old shotbag which you will find in the bottom of the kitchen closet," she said, "and be sure and bring it to me." When he delivered the bag to Mrs. Fildes he was astonished to find that it contained so much money.

Forrest Haldwell, who lives near Connorsville, Ind., has taught a herd of sixteen Jersey cows to do squad-right, squad-left and other movements in military drill. Entering the lot at milking time, the young man will shout "Attention," and the browsing bovines, becoming alert, stampede for a certain spot in the lot and line up in double ranks like a company of soldiers. When the trainer calls squad-right, the cows swing into lines of four abreast and march to the stable, turning to the right or to the left as the drillmaster may direct. At the stable door the cattle mark time until the trainer gives the word for them to pass into the barn.

When the Lippincott Medical Library of Stanford University was dedicated on November 3, 1912, Dr. David Starr Jordan delivered an address, in which he stated: "In modern war it now costs on the average about \$15,000 to kill a man. In the late Boer war, this expense ran up to nearly \$40,000. It is cheaper to save men. It is cheaper to stop killing. In our own country, in the time of peace, when nothing but peace is possible among civilized nations, we spend nearly a million dollars a day on matters connected with past or future war; \$870,000 a day, on future wars alone, that we may not be caught napping when the day of the impossible shall arrive."

While a gang of railroad men were repairing a washout on the S. W. between Cullip and Unity, Wis., at a place where the tracks cross a ravine, the water was held back by a dam formed from the refuse washed in above, making a pool fourteen feet deep. While attempting to break the dam a worker used a rope he tied around his body and held to a nail on a stone. While he was at work a steam locomotive came by, following a puffing train of freight cars. The engine, the cars and the men were seen to reel and fall in the water. The man was struck by the locomotive. The man held-

ing the rope, calling for assistance, began pulling the man, who was unconscious, ashore. Prompt action saved his life.

There is no use in having powerful and efficient arc lamps if the light is not reflected by mirrors of the proper section and polish; and in this respect a German inventor has succeeded in producing grinding machinery that will turn out perfect parabolic mirrors of any desired diameter, and of a wonderfully fine polish. The largest of these mirrors, two meters, or say 6.56 feet, in diameter, acting on a source of light of 440,000,000 candle-power, will illuminate large objects in favorable weather so that they may be distinguished at a distance of 18.5 kilometers, or 11.5 miles; and their light has been seen at a distance of 400 kilometers, equal to nearly 250 miles.

Mining for diamonds is now a regular employment at the Cherokee Mine, Oroville, Cal. William Fieldener brought five of the beautiful sparklers into the city the other day, and they will be on view at the Butte County display of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. The stones have been obtained within the past few weeks by Fieldener and Ben Yutz, who are hunting precious stones. The diamonds are found by washing out the so-called "yellow ground," which is the oxidized form of the blue ground or kimberlite. Not only have the men been successful in obtaining diamonds, but moonstones and other semi-precious stones have also been obtained. They report their operations much more profitable than when they were engaged in mining for gold.

Zeb Helms, of Charlotte, N. C., who has caught 523 minks in the past seven years, made the most money in his life and also broke the mink-killing record of his vicinity recently, when he was called to the home of Mrs. Morris, near Mint Hill. Mrs. Helms had lost 163 chickens the night before, the minks having killed many more of the fowls than were needed for food by them. Helms, with his four trained dogs and three others he had borrowed, trailed the animals to a big rock pile near Mrs. Morris's house. By moving some of the stones, Helms and the dogs killed fifteen minks in one hour. Several of the rocks near the bottom were too large to be moved, so dynamite was used. After the dust had settled and the smoke blown away, Helms found seventeen old minks and a half dozen young ones, and several probably were blown to pieces by the explosion. The veteran trapper said he had seen many large mink dens, but never one to compare with the nest on the Morris farm. It contained enough feathers to make two featherbeds. Helms is satisfied with his day's work, as the woman who lost the chickens gave him \$10 and the thirty-eight mink skins are worth \$15 or \$20.

THE SILVER WHEEL

— OR —

THE LIGHTNING LEAGUE OF LYNN

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XV.

NED AND JACK MEET THE TWO GIRLS—THE HUT ON FIRE.

A bridge crossed the gulch, and just as they came in sight of it, a wagon with a team of horses was driven onto it, the horses traveling at a fast rate.

Four people were in the wagon, a man who was driving, another man sitting behind, and two girls.

"Do you see that?" cried Ned, excitedly. "It's Winnie and Sadie!"

The girls had recognized their two friends and were waving their hands to them, but the carriage continued at the same pace.

"Why don't they stop?" said Jack. "And how is it Joe's not with them?"

"We'll ride after them and see," answered Ned.

This meant leaving the road along which they had been going, and turning down the other which ran at right angles to it. The carriage was about one hundred yards in front, and was increasing its lead in spite of the boys' efforts to overtake it.

"Stop! Stop!" cried Ned, breathlessly.

They saw Winnie King standing up in the wagon appealing to the driver, but she did not seem to have much effect with him, for the wagon still went on at the same furious pace.

"They're trying to get away from us," said Jack, nervously. "This must be some more of Ware's work. Do some scorching, Ned, for we must catch them."

They rode faster than ever now, and the carriage fairly flew along, but after a time it began to slow down, and the horses eventually came to a standstill, covered with foam and panting breathlessly.

"Pulled 'em up at last, boss," said the driver. "By gosh! they nearly dragged my arms out of their sockets."

"You mean the horses ran away?" said Ned, suspiciously.

"That's what they did, boss."

"How do you happen to be here, girls?" asked Jack.

"Why, Jack," answered Sadie, "Joe is in Topeka waiting for the riders to come up, and Winnie and I drove over to see an old school friend of ours, Grace Lodge, who used to live in Boston. Well, she has come to Topeka now, and keep near us," said Ned, in a whisper.

The carriage reached Topeka eventually, the two boys riding close to it all the way.

"I can't understand this business at all, Winnie," said Ned, when he and Jack were alone with the girls. "Did the horses run away?"

"No," answered Winnie. "And I'm satisfied it was not an accident our meeting with you, because we waited on the other side of that bridge for quite an hour. They claimed the horses needed rest, but as soon as the men saw you the team was whipped into a gallop at once."

"But what could be their object?"

"To get you to follow us."

"I don't see any use in that."

"But there is," cried Sadie. "You've lost quite half an hour."

"My gracious! then Jack is right after all. He said Ware was at the bottom of it. Why, that fellow must be spending a fortune, for he seems to have men in his pay everywhere and he knows all our movements. Hello, here's Joe."

"You're taking things easy," said Joe King.

"Why not? We're in front," answered Jack.

"You bet you're not. Green and Ware rode through five minutes ago."

"So we've lost all we gained. Well, no matter. We're good for another thirty or forty miles or so before sleeping, and we'll overhaul those two fellows before night. Good-by, girls. Good-by, Joe."

"We no sooner see you than you're away again, Ned," pouted Winnie.

"Can't be helped, Winnie. I'm sure I don't like it any better than you do, but you want me to win the Silver Wheel, don't you?"

"Yes, yes. Good-by, Ned, and ride as hard as you can for my sake."

"This is the toughest day's work we've had since we left Lynn," said Jack, when they were about a mile away from Topeka. "I don't know how you feel, Ned, but I'm clean used up. That was only a bluff I threw when I said we were good for thirty or forty miles."

"I'm half dead," replied Ned. "That scorching we did to overtake that carriage, on top of all the riding we'd done, settled me."

"I don't believe there's a town or village anywhere near," said Jack. "We ought to have stayed in Topeka, but I didn't want the girls to see that we were not going to go any further."

"I propose we turn in at the first place of shelter we

"A hole in the rock is good enough for me; a barn, or anything. I'm so dead tired I could sleep on my wheel."

"Hello! What's this?" cried Jack.

"Looks like a building of some kind."

They both dismounted and went nearer, and then they saw that the erection in front of them was the remains of an old shanty, which had been inhabited at some time, but must have been vacant for years, for it was damp and dilapidated.

"Not exactly a palace," laughed Jack, "but, as the sailors say, Ned, any port in a storm."

"It's good enough for me," said Ned, pushing open the door and entering with his wheel. Jack followed him at once.

There was enough light from the moon for them to see what the inside of the hut was like, and so they were able to choose a place to lie down upon where the soil was dry. Covering or pillows they had none, but they managed very well without, and as soon as their heads were on the earth they were fast asleep, and slumbering so soundly that an earthquake could not have awakened them.

Now, unknown to Jack and Ned, their movements had been watched by Green and Ware, who came over to the hut about fifteen minutes afterwards.

"Are they asleep?" asked Ware.

"They're breathing very heavily. There's no doubt they are fast asleep."

"This is the best chance we've had, Phil."

"Yes, and I'll tell you what we ought to do. Let us take their wheels away. We can do that and hide them, and then they're done for."

"I don't like the idea."

"Why not, Leslie?"

"Because to get their wheels we must go into the hut, and we can't do that without making a noise. It's very dark, and we'd be sure to stumble over something, and in that case they'd be on their feet in a minute, and our game would be spoiled."

"Can't we do anything?"

"Sure. There's a lock to this door."

"You mean to lock them in. Hooray! that's great."

"Yes, I mean to lock them in, Phil, but that's not all I intend to do. I propose to set fire to the hut!"

"Come off that, Leslie!" cried Phil, scared at what he heard. "I'm not going to have any hand in murder."

"Bah! There's no murder about it. The smoke will wake them, and they'll get out, but there won't be much of the tires of their machines left. The heat of the fire will destroy the rubber and with no tires and miles from anywhere, what are they going to do?"

Ware's influence prevailed, and so he and Green closed the door of the hut, and then set to work to collect a large quantity of dry wood and leaves, which they found in abundance near at hand, and so very soon they had quite as much as they wanted.

Leslie Ware applied the light, and in a moment there was a great blaze, and as soon as the two young villains saw this they hurried back to where they had left their wheels to watch the progress of the fire.

Green, feeling sorry for the part he had taken, wanted to rush back to put out the flames, but Ware prevented

him, and looked on at the burning hut with a smile on his face, quite indifferent to the fate of Jack Hudson and Ned Wood.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BURNING HUT—RIDING TO DEER-TRAIL.

It was not the noise made by Green and Ware, or the crackling of the wood, as it burned, that roused Jack from his sleep. It was the feeling that he was suffocating that made him wake.

"I can't breathe!" he gasped. "What can be the matter?"

As he sat up and looked around he felt himself beginning to choke.

"Ned! Ned!" he cried, clutching Ned by the arm and shaking him violently. "Wake up, old man!"

"It isn't time to start yet," said Ned, wearily, as he rubbed his eyes.

"You bet it is!" shouted Jack Hudson. "If we don't start out of here right away, Ned, we shan't start at all, for the place is on fire!"

There was no doubt about this now, for they could see the flames as they made their way into the hut. The boys, half choked with smoke, staggered over toward the door.

"It's locked!" cried Ned.

"Then we must burst it open!" exclaimed Jack, rushing at it, and throwing all his weight on the door. Even this violence did not force it open.

"Don't stand there," said Jack, sharply. "Let us make another rush, and this time we'll do it together. If you don't want to be turned into roast meat, Ned, you'll take a hand."

This time the force which was hurled against the door was sufficient to break it open, and the boys revived instantly as soon as they got a breath of fresh, cool air.

"A close call," said Jack. "Lucky I don't sleep like you, or we'd both be dead men."

"Our wheels!" gasped Ned. "They're inside the hut, Jack, and they'll be ruined!"

"We must fetch them," answered Jack. "If the fire once reaches them, or even the heat of it, we're done for. The tires would be ruined."

It was not an easy task now to get the wheels out of the burning hut, for it seemed to be a mass of flames, but the boys did not hesitate, and, rushing inside, they came out again in a few moments, each with his wheel.

They were black with smoke, and somewhat scorched, but the tires were entirely uninjured. As for the boys, they were almost choking, and it was some time before they were able to breathe naturally again.

"We've got the worst kind of luck," said Ned. "Everything seems to go wrong with us. It's been like this ever since we left Lynn. We ought to have brought a mascot along with us."

"How this fire began is a mystery to me," observed Jack. "We've not struck a light for any purpose whatever, and there's no one living near. Certainly, it is very mysterious."

(To be continued)

FACTS WORTH READING

EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION OF ANGOLA.

This large Portuguese possession, one of the least known portions of Africa, has recently been the theater of explorations on a very extensive scale by a French expedition under Count Jacques de Roban-Chabot. During the years 1912-1914 a total distance of about 4,350 miles was covered by the explorers, in the southern part of the colony, between the Atlantic and the Zambesi. Numerous positions were determined astronomically; magnetic and meteorological observations were made; and an ethnographic survey was carried out. The country was found to be very sparsely inhabited; in fact, there are vast territories without any inhabitants. The climate is unhealthful, and mosquitoes are a terrible pest. Nevertheless, the exploitation of this region is now greatly interesting German capital. Several missions of investigation have been sent thither from the adjoining German colony of Southwest Africa, and plans are on foot for developing a railway system, to be connected with the German lines to the southward.

PERUVIAN WAR CRAFT GOES THROUGH PANAMA CANAL.

Distinction of being the first war vessel to pass through the Panama Canal was won August 19 by the Peruvian torpedo boat destroyer Teniente Rodriguez. The boat made the trip successfully under its own engines and all concerned were greatly pleased.

At the finish of the trip the canal authorities inspected the craft and pronounced it as efficient for offensive work as when it entered the canal. The captain said to the World correspondent, who was on board by invitation of the Peruvian Legation, with the approval of Col. George W. Goethals, Governor of the Zone: "I can be ready for action in six minutes."

All the Peruvian officers spoke in most appreciative terms of the great accomplishment of the American Government in building the canal. They said the enterprise meant so much for South America that every government there would rally instantly to the support of the United States should it ever be necessary to defend the canal from hostile attack.

FLIGHT OF ZEPPELIN X A DISTANCE OF 916 MILES.

The last dirigible tried by the German war office in 1912, the mysterious Zeppelin X, made a continuous trip from Stettin over the Baltic to Upsala in Sweden, thence across the Baltic again to Riga in the Gulf of Finland, where it doubled and sailed back to Stettin. This was a journey of 976 miles. The airship had a complement of twenty-five men and twelve tons of dead weight. It traveled under severe weather conditions, the month being March, and snowstorms, hail and rain occurred throughout the voyage. The significance of this flight can be

easily understood if you consider that the distance from Strassburg or Dusseldorf to Paris or other strategical points in France is approximately 480 kilometers. A ship like the Zeppelin X could sail over the French border, dynamite the fortifications around Paris and return, the journey being roughly about 1,000 kilometers less than the actual trip made by the Zeppelin X. Moreover the German military trials have shown the possibility of an aerial fleet leaving its home ports and cruising to foreign lands and returning without the necessity of landing to replenish its gas tanks or fuel."

ABOUT "PIGEON TOES."

After an investigation which has lasted four years Dr. Leslie Helms, the orthopedic specialist, has convinced himself by psychological laboratory tests that persons with pigeon toes and knock-knees have a decidedly lower mental state than normal people. Dr. Helm calculates that about 2 per cent of all men have some slight degree of in-pointing feet or convexities of the knees.

Not one of those who were subjected to the psychic tests were anywhere near perfect. When examined for their capacity to associate ideas or to remember quickly they all proved to be sluggish and much slower than the ordinary man.

Even the memory for colors and past events, the steadiness of the muscles, the acuteness of the senses and the control of the hands were all disordered, defective or much slower in the pigeon-toed.

Dr. Helm also searched the individuals with this strange trouble for their power of recognition and recall. Pictures, photographs, paintings and sculpture, as well as familiar faces, were exposed to them. He is certain that not one of the pigeon-toed individuals could approach the ability of the normal footed one in recognizing quickly and accurately the things shown.

Although only a few persons with bow legs were studied, Dr. Helm was amazed to find that they not only surpassed in mental poise those with inturned feet or knock knees, but the bow-legged ones were decidedly brighter than the average person with his cantilever legs and slightly turned-out toes.

While this investigator does not in so many words say that all pigeon-toed men are crazy, he does not mince matters in the slightest when he emphasizes their woeful lack of mental perfection. He even gives a lot of historical data to prove that no mental giant since Moses ever had turned feet.

Even the invalids such as Popel, Gibbon, Milton, Poe and similar Gargantuan intellects, who were physically weak, had no limb deformities.

He has also found in institutes for the feeble-minded that the proportion of inmates with pigeon toes is out of all expectation. Over 58 per cent of idiots, imbeciles and morons have turned-in feet, while there is noteworthy absence of bowed legs.

The Fight for the Pirate's Isle

— OR —

CAPTAIN DIABLO'S LAST CRUISE

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER II (continued).

Harry and Ben Barnacle were busily engaged in seeing that the orders were obeyed.

Dick rushed down to the cabin, where he found Claire and Grace in a state of the utmost alarm.

"Don't be frightened, dear," he said to Claire, taking her in his arms and kissing her, "it'll be all right."

Then he dashed up on deck, ready for the fray.

The Albatross sailed much faster than the brig. This was very evident.

Right down past the British ship went the privateer.

As she did so, there was a loud report, and a shock under which the vessel seemed to reel.

The Albatross had poured a broadside into the brig.

The shots crashed through the rigging and into the hull.

Some swept the deck.

The brig replied instantly, but her shot did little damage.

On went the Albatross.

Sailing right across the bows of the man-of-war she fired again, raking the brig from stem to stern.

There was a falling of sails and a crashing of timber.

Down came foretop-gallant and fore-royal sails. The jibboom was carried away. The jib and flying jib falling added to the mass of cordage and wreckage that lay on the deck and over the bows of the brig.

The fire of the Albatross had done terrible execution.

There was no possibility of the brig making off.

She lay on the water crippled and helpless.

"That's the way to wake 'em up!" shouted Ben Barnacle, amidst the din.

"Get ready, boarders!" shouted Dick Decker, in a voice which rang out like a trumpet through the noise of battle, as the Albatross and the brig were rapidly coming together.

He stood in the fore shrouds, cutlass in hand, waiting his opportunity to board the enemy, and apparently unconscious of the showers of bullets which whistled around him.

With a crash, the two ships met.

Quick as lightning, Dick Decker sprang over the side of the brig, followed by his men.

At the same time Harry was engaged at the stern of the ship in repelling a desperate attack which was being made in that quarter.

The fight was now general, and nothing was heard but the cries of the combatants, the clashing of steel, the sound of firearms and the shriek of the wounded.

In agony the two girls, shut in their cabin, listened to the fierce din which came from the strife in which their loved ones were engaged.

Dick Decker fought more impetuously than ever.

He saw that his men were greatly outnumbered, and he trusted that his example would encourage and animate them. And so it did, for they fought like heroes.

His daring also carried terror amongst the ranks of the enemy.

For his path was marked by a line of dead and dying.

The Britishers seemed to avoid him.

A young English lieutenant seeing this lost his temper and swore at his men.

"You curs! You cowards!" he shouted, "what, afraid of a boy!"

With these words he made his way through the press, and in a moment crossed blades with the privateer captain.

"Now, my young gentleman, I shall give you a lesson," he said.

"Are you quite sure you are able to do so?" said Dick Decker, as he warded off a furious blow from the other.

"So sure, my lad," said the English lieutenant, who had an evil countenance and a harsh, grating voice, "that I advise you to take your last look around, for you haven't many minutes to live!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Dick Decker, loudly.

This irritated his opponent, who redoubled his efforts and tried in vain to break through his adversary's guard.

At this moment there was a loud shout from the stern of the brig, and an English officer waved a white handkerchief on the point of his sword.

At the same time the English flag was struck.

Harry Hamilton had repulsed the boarders, and dashing after them onto the deck of their own vessel, had attacked them so desperately that the English captain, who was badly wounded, surrendered.

Immediately Dick Decker lowered the point of his sword.

The other had seen the signal to stop the fight, but in his mad rage he had not heeded it, and at the privateer captain, narrowly missing him.

Dick's eyes blazed with anger at this infamous action.

"That was a foul stroke," said Captain Dick.

The other muttered something, but showed not the slightest expression of regret for his unmanly action.

Then with a sneer he said, handing over his cutlass:

"I suppose you'll want this little toy?"

"No, sir," said Dick Decker, severely. "I do not wish to soil my hands with a weapon that has touched yours."

The English lieutenant turned livid with rage as he dropped his cutlass on the deck of the brig.

CHAPTER III.

A STRANGE DUEL.

The fight was over, 'The Dauntless—for that was the name of the British brig—was in the hands of the young privateer.

The English captain, who was desperately wounded when he struck his colors, now lay dead on the deck of his vessel.

Near the fore-castle stood the English lieutenant and three or four fellow-officers engaged in conversation.

"That fellow's a demon," said one.

"Who?"

"Why, the man who's taken our ship," was the reply. "I never saw anybody in my life fight like he did."

"Morton knows that," said another; "it's deuced lucky for him the ship struck or he'd have joined our gallant captain."

Now Morton was the name of Dick Decker's last opponent. He was cordially detested by all his comrades. His temper was violent, and he was harsh and unforgiving.

"What's that you say?" he cried, not quite understanding what was said.

"Oh! I only remarked that it was a good thing for you when the fight was over."

"Why, may I ask?"

"Because you had more than your match."

Morton's face reddened with anger.

He swore furiously.

"What! that youngster?"

"Yes, that youngster!"

"Pshaw! I'd fight him blindfolded."

"By heaven, you shall!" said a sharp, stern voice.

Turning around, Lieut. Morton found himself face to face with Dick Decker.

For a few seconds the two men glared at each other, whilst their eyes shone with the fire of hate.

"Just now," resumed Dick, "you struck at me when I was not looking. My dear lieutenant, you shall have now a fine opportunity to repeat the performance."

"I don't understand you," stammered the lieutenant.

"Don't I make my meaning sufficiently clear? Well, I'll try and do so. You said a moment ago, not thinking I should hit you, that you'd fight me blindfolded."

"Well?"

"So you said. Only I'll make the fight fair, so I'll blindfold myself."

"But it's no loss."

"Is it? Do you know I'm going to kill you?" said Dick, "and I prefer not to see your villainous countenance when I do so."

At this remark the lieutenant became livid with rage.

"Name your own conditions, whatever they are. I'll fight you to the death!"

Harry Hamilton came up to Dick Decker and talked earnestly with him.

"Dick, let me beg of you not to take part in this mad folly."

"Harry, my mind's made up."

"But think, man, think of Claire."

"I do, Harry, I do, but would you have me show the white feather to this fellow?"

"No, certainly not, but why not fight him in the ordinary way?"

"Because I want to fight in another way. It's a woman's reason, but I can give you no better."

It was useless to argue with Dick Decker.

Ben Barnacle tried his hand, but with no better success than Harry.

"Shure, if you fight blindfolded, Masther Dick, ye'd better have my ould handkerchief with the holes in it and keep your eyes wide open."

The Irish cook, Mike, who was sailing with Dick Decker, found his advice was not taken. But it made the privateer captain laugh.

"No, no, Mike. I fight fair. You ought to know me well enough by this time to be sure of that."

"Bedad an' that's right enough; but shure the spalpeen ye've got agin ye'll peep round the corner on the sly."

The preliminaries for this strange duel were soon settled.

The party moved up to the waist of the ship, where there was ample room for the combatants.

Two cutlasses were brought and were carefully measured to show they were of equal length.

Their polished steel blades gleamed in the sun, and the edges of the weapons were as keen as razors.

Then heavy handkerchiefs were carefully wound around the eyes of the two men, so that every ray of light was excluded.

Harry Hamilton was satisfied after a critical inspection of the lieutenant's bandage that he was unable to see.

One of Lieut. Morton's brother officers did the same with Dick.

Everything, therefore, was as fair as possible.

The two men standing close to each other were placed with the points of their swords touching.

"Are you ready?" said Harry, in a loud voice.

"Yes," came from each of the men.

"Strike!" cried Harry.

At this instant, Claire and Grace, finding the fight was over, came on to the deck of the Albatross, which was lying alongside the Dauntless.

The two girls took in the whole scene at a glance.

There, on the deck of the brig, they saw Dick Decker and his opponent, both blindfolded, confronting each other, cutlass in hand, whilst the air rang with the furious clashing of their weapons.

Claire turned pale as death and clung to Grace.

She tried to speak, but her tongue seemed glued to her mouth.

Her brain reeled.

(To be continued)

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The German Emperor's war train is described by a refugee just escaped from Germany. The train is intended for the use of the Emperor and his war staff and consists of dining, council and sleeping cars, added to which are well-fitted boxes for his Majesty's chargers and his motor car. The train carries expert telegraphers and is preceded and followed by armored trains. Among the equipment is a small, simple tent which is to be pitched on the field whenever the Emperor deems it expedient to share the simple life of his troops.

Old men still have the chance to shine publicly in Japan. Count Shigenobu Okuma, who recently accepted the premiership, is 76 years old. His important public services began in 1873, when he was put in charge of the treasury department. He became minister of foreign affairs in 1888, and revised the treaties which were closed before the restoration. Because of his progressive and liberal stand in international relations, an attempt was made upon his life, and as a result of this he lost a leg. Count Okuma was premier in 1896, and at the same time, being a successful horticulturist, he held the ministry of agriculture and commerce as well as of foreign affairs. He became the opposition leader when his cabinet lost power.

How I got drunk! Sure, and the story is a good one for the good residents of Waterloo, Iowa. Mrs. J. W. Chapman, residing at 128 Indiana street, in making an

inspection of her canned fruit, discovered a can of brandied apples that had spoiled and she gave the fruit to the chickens. Visiting the coop an hour or two later, she was shocked to find three old hens and probably the best layers and mothers of the whole flock lying dead drunk and several of the younger brood trying to navigate in a very uncertain and decidedly unsteady gait. It is stated that several of the young cockerels apparently were trying to stand on their heads and turn back somersaults for the entertainment of the pullets which were clustered in a corner of the pen. By the following morning the poultry had recovered.

A minute study of the tornadoes that devastated Iowa and Nebraska in March last year has been made by Prof. Jules Black, who reports to Geographic the following interesting facts: There were five distinct tornadoes, from ten to twenty five miles apart, moving on parallel lines from southwest to northeast, at speeds of from fifty to sixty miles an hour. They approached like enormous and almost vertical cylinders, their bases seeming to drag along the ground. They were from 1,300 to 2,600 feet in diameter. The phenomenon of suction, about the existence of which in tornadoes there has been some dispute, was visible everywhere. The speed of the whirling motion could be measured from its effect upon various objects that were driven into each other. It varied from 186 to 372 miles an hour!

Fame and Fortune Weekly

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BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

The employees of the Tri-State Candy Company were routed by a huge swarm of honey bees that invaded the building and stung their way to the candy that was ready for packing. More than one hundred boxes of "all-day suckers" were ruined. After the windows were screened it was possible to resume business.

Electrical engineers will be interested to learn that extensive deposits of platinum have been discovered at Wendon in Westphalia, and that they are soon to be worked on a large scale. Hitherto, we have had to depend almost entirely upon the mines in the Ural Mountains for this metal which is so indispensable in electrical apparatus. Fully 95 per cent of the world's production of platinum has come from Russia.

Eli Sawden, aged fifty-one, of Sanilac County, Mich., is dead from nicotine poisoning, the result of being locked up with a circuit court jury in a small room for more than two hours. Sawden never had used tobacco in any form. The other jurors smoked almost continuously while in the jury room, the fumes of the tobacco making Sawden violently ill. He failed to recover after the experience.

Rio Theodoro is the name given by the Brazilian government, at the suggestion of Dr. Muller, Brazilian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to the river recently explored by the Roosevelt-Rondon expedition, and heretofore known as the Rio da Duvida. Col. Rondon's report on the expedition gives the geographical co-ordinates of a number of points along the river, making it possible to place the river in approximately its correct position on the map. These are quoted in the July number of Petermanns Mitteilungen, and show the course of the river to be almost due north and south.

Two wild deer which jumped a fence inclosing a garden belonging to Warren Murphy and took to the highway five miles west of Caldwell, N. J., afforded Henry Clevenger, a motorcyclist from Newark, a lively chase for more than a mile. A dog belonging to Murphy routed the deer from the garden, and after chasing them for some

distance frightened one so that it disappeared in a swamp. A second deer, a stag, bolder than its companion, pawed the ground and threatened Clevenger when he took up the chase after it and had jumped from his machine when the deer stopped suddenly in the road. Continuation of the chase brought the deer into a position between two automobiles, when it ran to the side of the road, jumped a fence and disappeared into the same swamp as its companion. The presence of wild deer in this section of New Jersey is unusual. All the deer existing hereabouts were believed to have been killed off years ago. Since last fall, however, farmers have been annoyed at times by the animals, and it is thought that they have been breeding in the swamp and woods between Hanover Neck and Pine Brook.

JOKES AND JESTS.

"Casey, do you know what corporal punishment is?"
"It's having a blackguard over ye who thinks he's as good as his colonel."

He (nervously)—Margaret, there's been something trembling on my lips for months and months. She—Yes, so I see; why don't you shave it off?"

Mother—Ethel, you naughty child! What have you been doing to make Charlie cry so? Ethel—I've only been sharing my codliver oil with him, mamma. You said it was so nice!

Wife—How did Mr. Bilkins manage to pass that civil-service examination which you failed in? Husband—Bilkins took his little boys with him, and the boys coached him. They had only been out of school a few weeks.

Teacher—Now, Tommy, suppose you had two apples, and you gave another boy his choice of them. You would tell him to take the bigger one, wouldn't you? Tommy—No. Teacher—Why? Tommy—'Cos 'twould not be necessary.

An English sailor was watching a Chinaman who was placing a dish of rice by a grave. "When do you expect your friend to come out and eat that?" the sailor asked. "Same time as your frien' come out to smellee flowers you fellow put," retorted Li.

"I hev come to tell ye, Mrs. Malone, that yer husband met with an accident." "An' what is it now?" wailed Mrs. Malone. "He was overcome by the heat, mum." "Overcome by the heat, was he? An' how did it happen?" "He fell into the furnace over at the foundry, mum."

"Here is an apple, Willie. Divide it generously with your sister." "How shall I divide it generously, mamma?" "Why, always give the larger part of it to the other person, my child!" Willie reflected for a moment; then he handed the apple to his little sister, saying, "Here, Ethel, you divide it!"

AN APACHE ATTACK.

By Paul Braddon.

Jonathan Gustavsen, a civil engineer, who arrived in this city some time ago from Topeka, Kan., gives a graphic recital of the massacre of a party of railroad prospectors on the plains of New Mexico by Apache Indians. His story is as follows:

Years ago the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, having decided to extend the line from Santa Fe through the Indian Territory to Blue Spring, Kan., sent out a party to prospect and make arrangements as to the course of the new line. This party, eighteen in number, was made up as follows: H. Burchill, engineer, in command of the party; C. B. Ball, transit engineer; Jonathan Gustavsen, leveling engineer; C. Clare, rodman; Frederick Spaulding, head chainman; Robert Ling, hind chainman; W. Wendell, axeman; George Howells, axeman; Cheny Braly, stickman; John Seeley, stickman; Lawrence Miller, flagman; Jerry Connor, helper; Frederick Leslie, helper; Charles Woodern, helper; Frederick Evalt, helper; Lawrence Hallen, topographer; Charles Cameron, teamster; Charlie, a negro cook. The three engineers commanding the party had all been in the employ of the Northern Pacific Railroad, west of the Rocky Mountains, for four years past, and had left their position on that road to go out with the party.

During the first three months all went smoothly, and the work upon which they were engaged proceeded rapidly and satisfactorily.

As the middle of August approached the party found itself on the plains of New Mexico, between the Snake River and the North Fork River, and about thirty-five miles from the town of St. Elmo. A band of Crow Indians and a small body of Cheyenne Indians were also in the vicinity, and evinced a very friendly disposition toward the whites. From these Indians it was learned that a band of hostile Apache Indians were believed to be lurking in the neighborhood.

About eleven o'clock on the morning of August 12, as the party was at work not far from the Snake River, fixing the course of the railroad line, two shots were suddenly heard. A moment later Mr. Burchill was seen running from the direction of a low clump of hills near which he had been at work. He ran up to where Gustavsen was standing with several of the men and cried:

"I have just been shot at. I think the Apaches are around us. If so, we may leave our souls to heaven."

As he spoke a number of Apache Indians, in full war paint, appeared on the clump of hills in the direction from which Mr. Burchill had come.

Gustavsen gave a warning signal assembling the men around him. He had been a cowboy in his day, and this was by no means the first fight in which he had been engaged with hostile Indians. He hastily counseled the men to keep well together, without crowding each other, and to retreat as rapidly as possible toward camp. He wound up his instructions by exclaiming:

"Let us keep cool, anyway, and if we have to part with our skins, let us sell them as dearly as we can."

The men responded cheerily to this sentiment. In the meantime the Indians, having come nearer, opened fire. The whites fired back, and began the retreat toward camp, over three miles away.

There were about fifty Indians in the attacking party. A running fight followed. The Indians galloped warily around the whites, who were on foot, and the latter as they fled turned at intervals and fired at their pursuers. They obeyed Gustavsen's directions, and avoided getting separated.

The character of the country, which abounded in little knolls, was favorable to escape.

After chasing the whites about a mile toward the camp the Indians gave up the pursuit. When camp was reached it was found that two men—Lawrence Hallen, the topographer, and Frederick Leslie, a helper—were missing. They had been working close to the hills from which the Indians emerged, and it was supposed that they had been either killed at the first fire or captured. They have never been heard from since.

None of the other members of the party had suffered any serious mishap. Both the missing men were about twenty-five years old, unmarried, and had been engaged in Omaha.

After this encounter with the Apaches, the closest watch was maintained, and pickets were placed on watch day and night.

About midnight on the night of August 16 the party was encamped near the Snake River.

A couple of miles away was the camp of the Crows. All the members of the party were asleep, with the exception of the pickets and C. B. Ball, the transit engineer, and Charles Clare, the rodman, both of whom sat beside the campfire, talking.

Suddenly a fusillade rang out in the stillness of the night, and both the men sitting beside the campfire fell forward, dead. In an instant Gustavsen awoke, and realized that the Apaches were upon them. At that moment Engineer Burchill cried out:

"We are attacked! For heaven's sake, boys, keep together!"

The men had previously been instructed, in the event of a night attack, to lie on their stomachs and fire in that position. In this position they could less readily be seen by the Indians, and offer less of a target for the enemy's fire than in any other position they could have assumed.

In spite of the suddenness of the attack and the rude manner in which they had been awakened from their sleep, the men kept their heads well, and followed the instructions which had been given them. The moon was shining, and in its light a number of dark forms could be discerned crawling over the ground in the direction of the camp. The whites fired upon these dark figures, and the Apaches returned the fire.

The fusillade kept up by the Indians—who seemed about fifty in number—surprised the whites that they were being attacked from the front and on each side.

But soon a more brilliant light than the moonshine was thrown on the scene.

Sullenly a crackling sound was heard, two bright flashes of flame shot up in the air, and, to their dismay, the whites perceived that their camp was on fire in two places.

In the excitement of the battle an Apache had succeeded in stealing up to the tents unperceived and had set them on fire. The tents burned so fiercely that they were completely destroyed in ten minutes.

Up to this time the advantage of position had been somewhat in favor of the whites, as they lay in the shadow of the tents, and only the flash of their rifles served as an object at which the Indians could aim. The Apaches, on the other hand, were frequently caught right up in the moonlight, and thus made the object of a fatal aim. The bright light of the burning tents, however, turned the scale in this respect in favor of the Apaches, and the whites suffered severely.

The encircling fire of the Indians grew closer and closer to the whites, who maintained a desperate resistance, and who shot with such accuracy and telling effect that the Apache approach was made with slowness and deliberation.

Of the burned tents nothing but the fitful embers remained, and the fight had lasted upward of an hour, yet the whites still resisted, and fired with deadly aim. But the Apaches were drawing momentarily nearer and nearer around the site of the camp, and one by one the guns of the whites were silenced.

At last Gustavsen saw Apaches on each side of him, less than thirty yards off.

Bullets were whistling all about him. Every instant he expected to receive his death-wound. He had fully given himself up for lost, when all of a sudden the Crow warcry broke out from behind the Apaches.

The friendly Crows had been attracted by the firing, and had come to the rescue of the whites. They outnumbered the Apaches, and the latter were compelled to hastily withdraw, fighting fiercely as they went.

When the Apaches had been driven off, and the camp of the whites was searched, it was found that only three of the party had survived the Apache attack.

C. B. Hall had been shot in the head, and had fallen forward with his head in the fire, beside which he had been sitting.

Clare, the rodman, had been shot in one temple, the bullet coming out by the other. His hands and arms were burned by his having fallen into the campfire. Frederick Spaulding, the head chainman, a lad of eighteen years, with beautiful blonde hair, lay with half his scalp torn off. An Apache had evidently been in the act of scalping him when he was frightened off by the approach of the Crows. In his haste the Apache had broken his knife, and a portion of the blade was embedded in the dead lad's skull. The thirteen dead whites lay where they had been shot—beside their guns. The three survivors were Jonathan Gustavsen, Cameron, the teamster, and Charles, the negro cook. They were taken to the Crow camp, where they were carefully attended to. On the following morning the dead whites were buried in one deep grave dug near the spot where they had fought so fiercely for their lives. All

the instruments and papers of the party were lost in the burned tents. The Crows assisted the three survivors to St. Elmo, whence they were transported to Topeka.

HOW TO CANDLE EGGS.

To enable farmers and housewives to test eggs before a candle and tell accurately their condition before they are opened, the Department of Agriculture has just published a colored egg candling chart. To give a true picture of the eggs, twelve impressions were necessary to produce this lithographed chart.

This chart shows the eggs in their natural size as they appear before a candle, and also as they look when open in a glass saucer. The pictures include an absolutely fresh egg, slightly stale eggs, decidedly stale eggs, eggs with yolks sticking to the shell, eggs where the chicken has developed so far that blood has been formed, mouldy eggs, addled eggs and eggs with a green white.

Comparatively few housewives are aware that a green color in the white of eggs is due to the presence of billions and billions of a certain species of bacteria that make a green coloring matter. Eggs with this greenish tint, even though the yolks seem to be perfect, are not fit for food.

As long as the department's supply lasts, these charts will be furnished free upon application to the editor and chief, Division of Publications. Commercial shippers of eggs, however, should apply for Departmental Bulletin 51, a technical paper on testing by scientific methods not available to the average farmer. This bulletin includes the colored illustrations.

This chart alone will be found to be not merely of great service to the housewife wishing to test the eggs she is to serve to her own family, but also of commercial value to farmers, country merchants or egg shippers who wish to buy and handle eggs on an accurate quality basis.

The great spoilage of eggs in this country is due to bad handling and is quite unnecessary. Part of the remedy is to teach everybody, from the farmer to the consumer, how to tell the quality of an egg without breaking the shell. The country buyers, the middlemen and the housewife judge of the quality of the inside of a cucumber or an eggplant or any other vegetable by the appearance of the outside and the firmness of its texture. It is not possible to tell the quality of an egg by looking at the shell, though it is safe to say that the eggs with shiny shells are apt to be aged. A fresh egg looks as though it had been dusted with a very fine powder; the "bloom," as the egg men say. But in order to know what is inside the shell the egg must be held in front of a strong light, such as an electric bulb furnishes, which comes through a hole about one and one-fourth inches in diameter. The room must be dark. When the egg is held close against the hole the bright light renders its contents visible, and the quality is indicated by the appearance of the yolk, the white and the air space at the blunt end. There are many egg "candles" on the market, but the housewife can easily make one for herself by cutting a hole in a small pasteboard box, which is slipped over an electric light bulb. If gas or an oil lamp is the source of light, a tin box or can should be used.

GOOD READING

Divers in the employ of a salvage company working on the sunken steamer *Empress of Ireland* succeeded in raising the purser's safe to the deck of the schooner from which they were operating.

Although Italy has on hand grain sufficient to last several months, the closure of the Dardanelles, through which the bulk of importation comes, and the suspension of exportations from Argentina compel the Italian people to turn to the United States for future provisions. The Government has already received offers from the American market, and the transportation of grain will be facilitated, as Italy will assume the war risks.

To explore the ancient mounds and Indian burial places in Scott County, Iowa, and vicinity, a society of Iowa scientists has been formed. It will co-operate with the Davenport Academy of Sciences, which has the largest collection of mound builders' relics in the Mississippi Valley. The new society expects to make important discoveries showing the stage of civilization which had been reached by the prehistoric inhabitants of that region of the country. Only a few of the Scott County mounds have been opened.

Word from Orlando, Fla., tells of the narrow escape from death by lightning of Charles Nystrom, a former Scandia citizen. Striking him on the back, between the shoulders, the bolt passed down his back and legs, partially paralyzing him from the waist down. He was literally skinned alive and his outer skin was burned to a crisp. Mr. Nystrom lived in Scandia, Kans., for many years, moving to his present home only a few years ago. At last accounts he was regaining the use of his limbs in spite of his terrible experience, but it is thought cannot recover.

Heroic efforts by Mrs. C. A. Moody, of Wilkaukee, in saving the lives of an aged couple who were threatened with death by a fire at Abilene, Kans., twelve years ago, were rewarded recently when she learned that she had been bequeathed \$14,000 by the provisions of a will filed at Los Angeles, Cal. Mrs. Moody risked death in the flames to save the couple, and also befriended them afterward by caring for them during a period of illness. While refusing to divulge the names of her benefactors she admitted that it was true that she had been provided for in the will. She said the bequest was partly in cash and partly in property.

A boy passing through the Erie Railroad yards in Jersey City the other night heard weak shouts in a box car and opened the door. On top of the sacks of potatoes he found Thomas Kennedy and Frank McAuliffe, of Syracuse, who had been left in the car for several days and were nearly dead from hunger

and thirsty they could not stand and their cries were barely audible. After the lads had received nourishment at the City Hospital they said they had been playing in the car when it was in the railroad yards in Syracuse and the door was closed upon them. For three days and two nights they suffered in the heat. Their parents were notified by telegraph that they would be able to leave the hospital in a few days.

An unruly bull broke loose from a bunch of cattle unloaded on the Embarcadero and dashing through the downtown business district, a vaquero in full chase, galloped up Nob hill into the thick of the fashionable apartment houses. Terrified by the chase behind him, and bewildered and infuriated by the street traffic, the bull turned abruptly off Pine street and butted into an apartment house hallway, shivering the door in his plunge. Once inside there seemed no turning back, and to the amazement and terror of the tenants, he kept on up three flights of stairs, butting in doors whenever the turns were too sharp. On the fourth floor the vaquero cornered the bull, but it was necessary to back him into a lady's bed-chamber before he could be lassoed and dragged downstairs.

George Sharp, a miner of Pedro Creek, Alaska, lived over a fortune more than nine years before he knew that the fortune existed. Sharp when he first came to the Fairbanks district located a claim on the right limit of Pedro Creek opposite No. 2, and prospected for gold on the claim at different times ever since. He spent most of his time searching for the yellow stuff on his other holdings, apparently neglectful of the possibilities right under the floor of his cabin. A few weeks ago Sharp sank a shaft near his cabin, got some prospects and then tunneled to bedrock for ten feet or so. He encountered coarse gold, some fair-sized nuggets being included in the dust obtained after sluicing a small dump.

If moving pictures tire your eyes try wearing amber glasses. The flicker of the pictures on the screen has something to do with the tiring effect, but by no means all. The violet and ultra-violet rays, in which the electric arc light by which the views are projected is very strong, bother the eyes as much or more than the flicker. There are violet and ultra-violet rays in all light except that especially filtered. You can prove this for yourself by looking over the edge of a pair of amber glasses, when you will see a sort of halo of violet about their border. Or you can look through the tiny hole that is bored for the chain or cord and see the same violet light. The amber glass cuts off the violet rays from the eyes and thus protects them from being dazzled. A Chicago film manufacturer tints his pictures a pale amber color on purpose to overcome this tiring effect.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

Last winter Clarence Cox, a young farmer, rented 120 acres of land near Van Buren, Arkansas, agreeing to pay \$10 per acre rent. Mr. Cox planted the greater part of the land in cotton and corn, and planted six acres in cantaloupes. Although this was a bad year for cantaloupes on account of the unusual number of insect pests and too much dry weather, Mr. Cox received \$1,515 for his melons. It cost him \$255 to grow and market the melons, leaving a net profit of \$1,260. He gathered from the six acres more than enough to pay the yearly rental on the 120 acres.

GETS PENNY REWARD.

Arthur Friedburg, a newsboy, living at 1217 Wabash avenue, Kansas City, recovered \$150.50 of lost money and received one cent reward when he returned it to the loser. A street car passenger, apparently a farmer or stockman, dismounted from a Chelsea University car at Twelfth and McGee streets. A leather purse dropped from his pocket in the vestibule of the car.

The newsboy, standing near the car, saw the purse drop. He scrambled aboard, recovered the purse and handed it to its owner. The latter opened the purse, counted the \$150.50 and said: "Yes, it's all there." Then, when the newsboy pushed a paper toward him, he drew a penny from his pocket, handed it to his little benefactor and walked away.

A stranger, who observed the happening, slipped a coin into the newsboy's hand and commended him for his honesty. The "newsy" shouted, "I don't care," and was gone in search of more pennies.

COCHRAN TURNS PROFESSIONAL.

Welker Cochran has turned professional. The Chicago boy wonder, whose eligibility to compete in the national amateur billiard championship last winter was a topic of hot discussion, has joined the Champion Billiard Players' League, which will present matches between leading players in many cities next winter. Before the beginning of the league season Cochran, who is only 16 years old, will be seen in a number of exhibition games in New York. He has placed himself under the management of President Burton L. Mark of the league, former manager of Willie Hoppe.

PANAMA'S BIG PROBLEM.

"The Panama Canal could never have been completed except for the work of the medical corps," said Sir Robert Woods, veteran engineer and builder and member of the British Parliament for twenty years. Sir Robert built the tunnel through the Andes, completed about two years ago; constructed the great harbor improvement at Buenos Aires and is about to start work on the construction of the Georgian Bay canal from the St. Lawrence to the great lakes.

"It was because the French could not combat disease

that they failed in the building of the Panama Canal," continued Sir Robert. "Your government realized that to make a success of the canal work disease would have to be stamped out, and it was almost as big an undertaking to do this as it was to dig the ditch. I do not take the view of some engineers that the Panama Canal is not a great engineering work, but merely a big work of excavation. It is a tremendous engineering feat, one of the greatest ever undertaken, and the engineers and builders deserve the greatest credit for it.

"The Andes tunnel was a big work, but difficult only because of the inaccessibility of the supply stations. The actual tunneling through the mountain was about five miles, but the approaches to the tunnel are about twenty miles on each side. The tunnel runs from Argentina on the east to Chile on the west."

EDIBLE SNAILS.

Snails are not so popular as an article of food in this country as they are in France. They are not very easily digested, according to a writer in the *Dietetic and Hygienic Gazette*, though he also says that they are "a nutritious and wholesome food, especially when kept a little time after gathering and purged of the possible injurious vegetable substances they may contain.

"The great snail market at the present time is Paris. More than 100,000,000 are distributed there annually, of which over 80,000,000 pass through the Central Market of that city alone. A goodly number are exported to America. France of herself cannot supply the demand but looks to Italy, Switzerland and even to Germany to satisfy in part her requirements.

"Those experienced say snail breeding is easy and inexpensive and that fortunes have been made out of the business in France. If one takes up snails commercially it is indispensable that he breed them, and this can be very economically done.

"Knowing the customs of snails nothing can be easier than to establish a pen of snailery for wholesale cultivation. A plot of ground in the country, a little cultivated if possible, damp or easily irrigated at discretion, for dampness is absolutely necessary to the snail, is all that is needed.

"Surround the pen with a fencing of very fine wire, which can also go under the ground to a depth of 0.30 centimeters to prevent the occupants' escape. It is best to border the pen at the bottom with tinned planks, preventing all possibility of the young snails especially getting away.

"Snails loving cool and shady spots, plant little snails, of box or anything similar, in the pen. Some odorous plants, such as thyme, sorrel, etc., will give a good flavor to the snail. In different places have vessels of water where the snail can bathe. Snail is the best food for them, but also, romaine and so on."

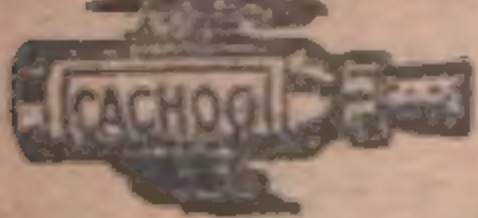
CHANGING MONEY TRICK BOX.



With this trick box you can make money change, from a penny into a dime or vice versa. Also make dimes appear and disappear at your command. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG,
1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDER.



The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price, by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

INDOO FLOWER-POT TRICK



With this trick you can make a plant grow right up in a flower-pot, before the eyes of your audience. An ordinary empty earthen flower-pot is handed to the spectators for examination. A handkerchief is then placed over it, and you repeat a few magic words, and wave your wand over it. When the handkerchief is removed there is a beautiful plant, apparently in full bloom, in the pot. Full directions with each outfit. Price, 15 cents by mail, postpaid.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

MARBLE VASE.



A clever and puzzling effect, easy to do; the apparatus can be minutely examined. Effect: A marble can be made to pass from the hand into the closed vase, which a moment before was shown empty. This is a beautiful enameled turned wood vase.

Price, 20c.

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NEW MASKS



Half-face masks with movable noses. A distinct novelty which will afford no end of amusement. They come in 6 styles, each a different face, such as Desperate Desmond, etc., and are beautifully colored and splendidly finished, with patent eyelets to prevent tearing. Price 15 cents apiece, by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

JAPANESE WATER FLOWERS



Without exception, the most beautiful and interesting things on the market. They consist of a dozen dried-up sprigs, neatly encased in handsomely decorated envelopes, just as they are imported from Japan. Place one sprig in a bowl of water, and it begins to exude various bright tints. Then it slowly opens out into various shapes of exquisite flowers. They are of all colors of the rainbow. It is very amusing to watch them take form.

Small size, price .5 cents; large size, 10 cents a package, by mail, postpaid.

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YOU ALL WANT THIS MEDAL!

You Can Get One for Six Cents!

Has a picture of Fred Fearnot on one side and Evelyn on the other. The chief characters of



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A lady's fan made of colored silk cloth. The fan may be used and then shut, and when it opens again, it falls in pieces; shut and open again and it is perfect, without a sign of a break. A great surprise for those not in the trick. Price, 35c. by mail, postpaid.

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These water-wings take up no more room than a pocket-handkerchief. They weigh 3 ounces and support from 10 to 250 pounds. With a pair anyone can learn to swim or float. For use, you have only to wet them, blow them up, and press together the two thin parts under the mouthpiece.

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BINGO.



It is a little metal box. It looks very innocent. But it is supplied with an ingenious mechanism which shoots off a harmless cap when it is opened. You can have more fun than a circus with this new trick. Place the

BINGO in or under any article and it will go off when the article is opened or removed. It can be used as a funny joke by being placed in a purse, cigarette box or between the leaves of a magazine, also, under any movable article, such as a book, tray, dish, etc. The BINGO can also be used as a Burglar Alarm or as a Theft Preventer by being placed in a drawer, money till, under a door or window, or under any article that would be moved or disturbed should a theft be attempted.

Price 15 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

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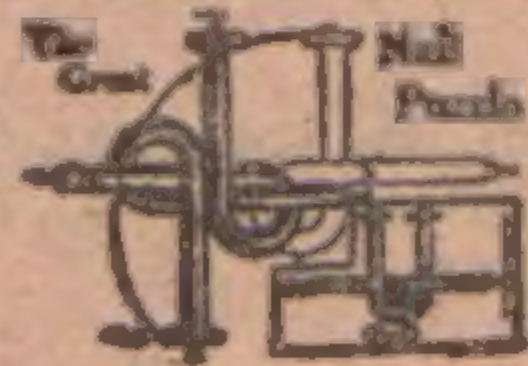
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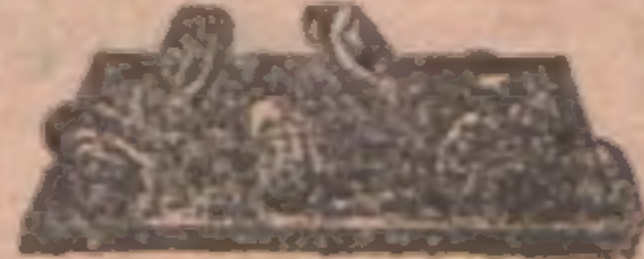
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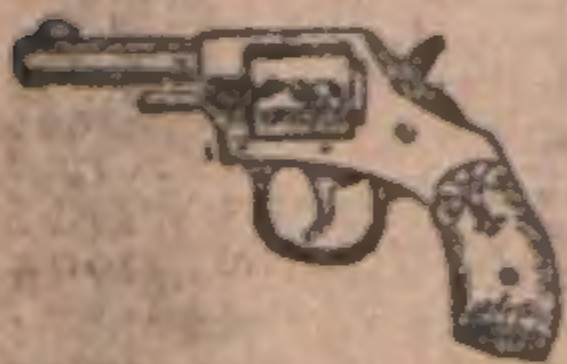
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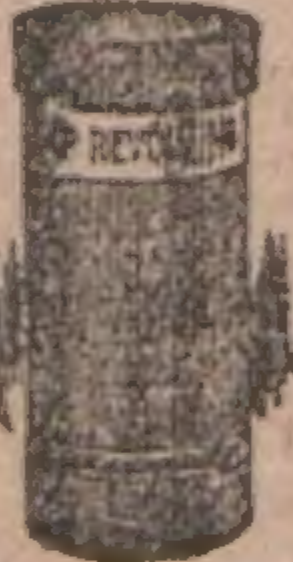


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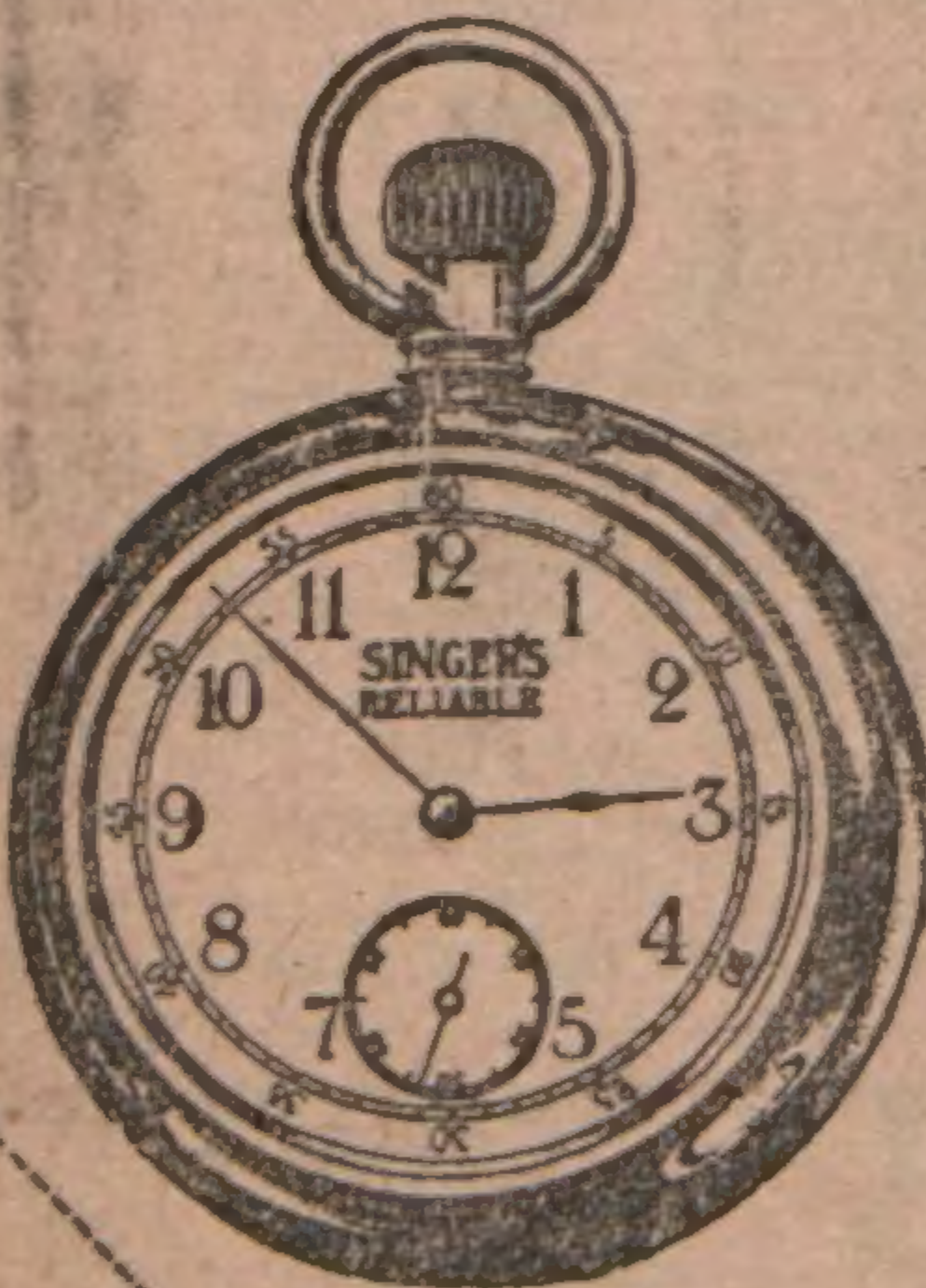


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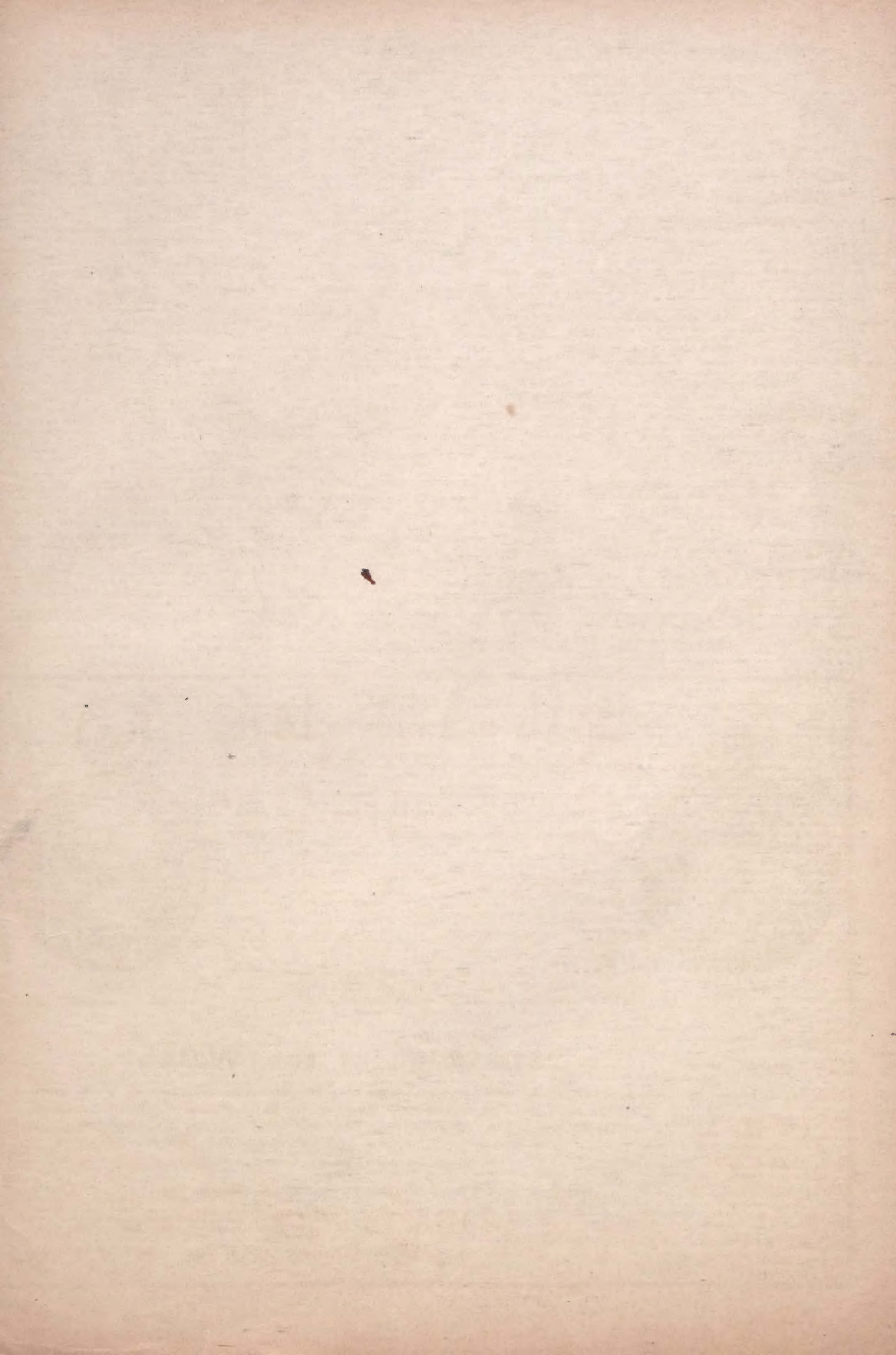
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